

ORLANDO Attractions

GAZINE

AttractionsMagazine.com
Volume 8, Issue 2
Spring 2015
\$5.99

Old is New

Sorcerer's Hat Removed!
The original view is back at
Disney's Hollywood Studios

TOMORROWLAND

**Details You
Didn't Notice**

Universal vs. Disney
The Creation of Universal's
Islands of Adventure

New Escape Room Attractions

Disney Historian Q&A

PLUS

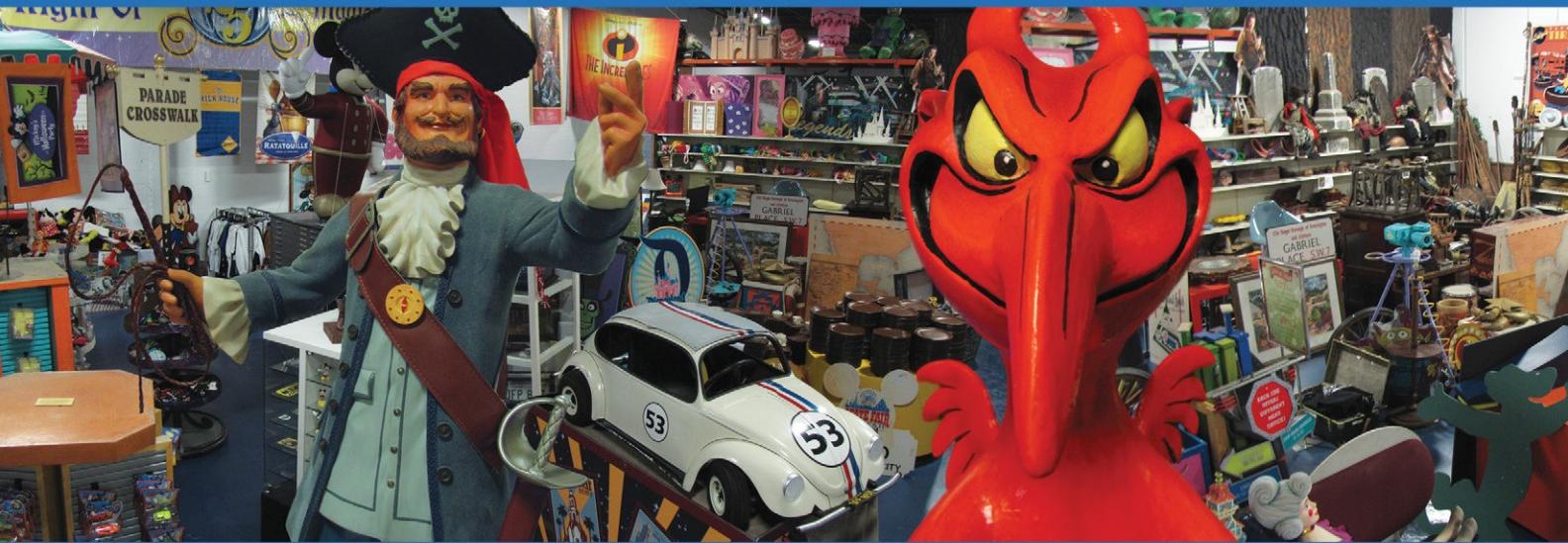
**Games, Cartoons, Top 10,
Rumors, Updates & More!**

**Disney's BoardWalk Inn
and new Trattoria al Forno**

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ON THE COVER:

The Chinese Theater is now the new view as you walk down Hollywood Boulevard at Disney's Hollywood Studios. The Sorcerer Hat was torn down earlier this year. Read more about it on page 10.



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THESE STORIES AND MORE...

In addition to the stories and photos in this magazine, check our website regularly for even more, plus many videos. Stay up-to-date with all the latest theme park and attraction news through our weekly video shows, download our free iPhone/iPad apps and sign up for our free e-mail newsletter.

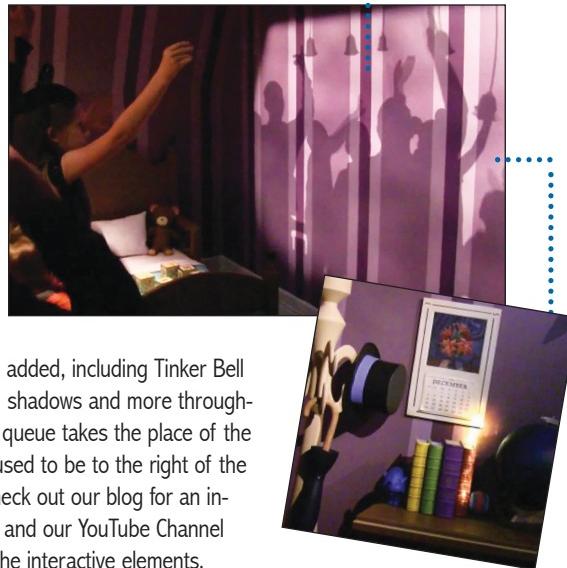
JOIN IN ON 'A CELEBRATION OF HARRY POTTER'

The second annual "A Celebration of Harry Potter" expo was held this past January at Universal Orlando Resort. The expo featured stars from the films, Q&A's, presentations and much more. We were there to bring you all the latest Wizarding World news. Check our website for a photo gallery and blog posts from the events. We've also posted videos including a segment on the Feb. 5 episode of The Show dedicated to it.



TAKE A DETOUR THROUGH THE DARLING HOUSE

Peter Pan's Flight recently debuted a new indoor queue taking guests inside the Darling house from the film. The queue gives guests a look at the nursery along with the corridors throughout the house. New interactive elements have been added, including Tinker Bell flying around, pixie dust, shadows and more throughout the queue. The new queue takes the place of the former bathrooms that used to be to the right of the attraction. Be sure to check out our blog for an in-depth look at the queue and our YouTube Channel for a video highlighting the interactive elements.



REWIND WITH @ATTRACTIOnS

Twitter is like a stream; it never stops flowing. We know keeping up with everything that's

tweeted is next to impossible for most people who follow more than a few accounts. That's why "The Weekly Rewind @Attractions" video was created. Each Monday, visit our YouTube channel to take a look back at the best photos and videos from our Twitter account. But don't stop following us on Twitter. There is much more we won't be able to highlight each week!



A LOOK AT THE ORLANDO EYE

The Orlando Eye has finished installing the passenger capsules onto the observation wheel and is gearing up for opening day May 4. The glass capsules arrived after making a transatlantic journey from Northern Germany with the glass being crafted in Turkey, and each capsule assembled in Hungary. They were attached to the wheel by a shaft and hangar attached to the top of the capsule, making it the first observation wheel that uses the ski lift capsule design.

Once open, guests will begin their journey, being quietly lifted away to enjoy the 360-degree views above the city below. Every capsule will offer air-conditioning, bench seating, lighting and audio effects for the 20-minute flight experience. Check out videos of the construction and the Jan. 22 episode of The Show dedicated to the installation of the capsules on our YouTube Channel.



LIVE FROM THE PARKS

Follow us on Twitter at twitter.com/attractions and our Facebook page at facebook.com/attractionsmagazine. We frequently post on-the-spot information, photos and short videos while we're inside Orlando's theme parks. You can also be notified of our latest videos if you subscribe to our YouTube channel at youtube.com/attractionsmagazine.

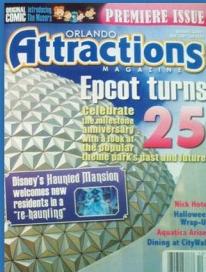
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Vol. 1, Issue 2



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Vol. 1, Issue 5



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Vol. 2, Issue 1



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Vol. 2, Issue 3



Summer 2009



Fall 2009



Winter 2009-10



Spring 2010



Summer 2010



Fall 2010



Winter 2010-11



Spring 2011



Summer 2011



Fall 2011



Winter 2011-12



Spring 2012



Summer 2012



Fall 2012



Winter 2012-13



Spring 2013



Summer 2013



Fall 2013



Winter 2013-14



Spring 2014



Summer 2014



Fall 2014



Winter 2014-15

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Feedback

YOUR COMMENTS, QUESTIONS, CONCERNS AND CREATIVITY ...

PERFECT VACATION

My wife and I have four kids and these photos were taken during our 2014 vacation to all Disney World parks and Universal Studios and Islands of Adventure. This year was particularly exciting because of the addition of Kings Cross, Diagon Alley and the Gringotts Bank attraction, and also the Magic Kingdom's Seven Dwarfs Mine Train. The interesting thing was the night prior to us riding Seven Dwarfs Mine Train, we had seen on the news that it had caught fire due to fireworks. However the next day with some Disney magic it was restored and running perfectly, and we enjoyed every minute of this great ride. The Escape From Gringotts Bank ride was everything we had envisioned and more. We made a quick dash to the Gringotts attraction and the wait time was only 25 minutes so we rode it twice! We then rode the Hogwarts Express to Hogsmeade and off to the Hogwarts Castle WWoHP. We really enjoyed every moment at all of the Orlando Theme Parks. We normally spend 8-10 days at Disney World parks and Universal/IOA splitting the time between both.

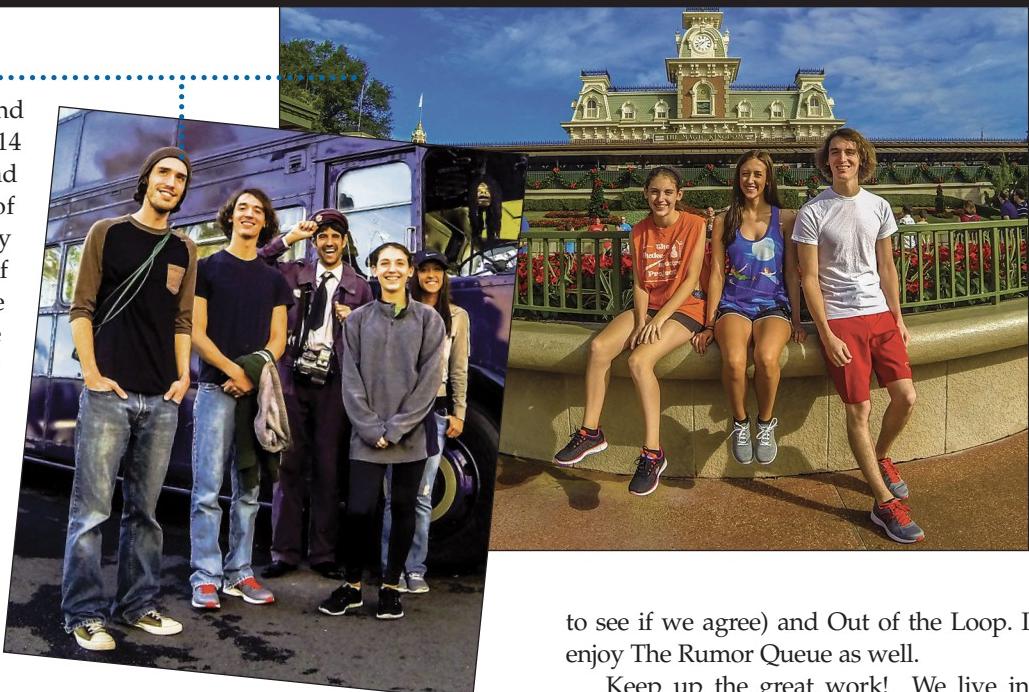
Bill Forshey
Belpre, Ohio

Great photos! It sounds like another perfect vacation in Orlando. Come back soon.

EMERGENCY SPECIAL?

I have been watching you on YouTube for several months now. My family and I want to relocate to Orlando from Central Michigan. I would like to go to work for Disney in some form of an emergency service or public safety role. Being in emergency services and knowing Florida is prone to hurricanes and other forms of public emergencies, I would like to know if you have ever filmed a show special on emergencies in a theme park. Specifically focusing on how visitors can plan their visits during hurricane season with safety in mind.

We enjoy watching your YouTube channel. It helps us feel like we are part of



the magic even though we're 1,200 miles and 18 hours away. Keep up the good work!

Brad Hazel
Flint, Mich.

No, we haven't done a show on this subject. We'll add it to our to-do list. But I can tell you the parks do give their guests plenty of warnings about impending storms. They also close their outdoor rides when lightning or other dangers are near.

ATTRACTIOMOBILE

My daughters, husband and I love your magazine and so were very excited to spot a car from your magazine in the Epcot parking lot when we visited late in August. We were all tired and I believe it was drizzling, but I just had to snap the photo to prove we saw it. We love all the articles in your magazine and especially enjoyed the Fall 2014 issue which featured Diagon Alley. My teenage daughter, husband and I are huge Harry Potter fans and were so amazed when we got to tour Diagon Alley. The detailing was just fantastic! Some of our favorite "regular" features of your magazine are Skipper Ben's Top Ten (it's fun to see if we agree or not), Spot the Difference (I have yet to find all 10 differences without cheating), Versus (again, fun

to see if we agree) and Out of the Loop. I enjoy The Rumor Queue as well.

Keep up the great work! We live in New Jersey, but plan to head to Florida once my husband and I can retire in about eight years! Your magazine reminds us why we love the Orlando area so much and it just makes us happy, even though we can't be there in person!

Lisa Hardman
Elmer, N.J.

We love it when fans post photos of our Attractionsmobile driving around Central Florida. We hope to see you living in Orlando sooner than later.



WRITE TO US!



"Like" Orlando Attractions Magazine on Facebook to keep up with all the latest news, and comment and answer next issue's Facebook question.

We want your letters and photos!

If you have any **comments** about the magazine, **questions** about traveling to Orlando or fun stories or photos to share, simply e-mail us at info@attractionsmagazine.com.

CORRECTION:

In the last issue, we made an error in our Q&A with C. McNair Wilson. In the caption for McNair during his time with SAK Theater at Epcot, we mistakenly stated he was part of Disney's World Showcase Players. This was a separate group of entertainers formed after Disney got rid of the SAK Theater and sought a replacement. We apologize for the inaccuracy.



We asked our Facebook fans: "What original theme park attraction would you like to see made into a movie?"



Jonathan Hughes

Carousel of Progress - We see a family discovering new technologies through the century but mysteriously keeps re-setting.

Mark Weaver

Haunted Mansion with Guillermo del Toro as a director... (One can dream? Right?)

Kyle Rapp

It's a Small World - Where the dolls are all real children who are turned into animatronics by some deranged psychopath but all still have working minds - I had a bad dream once.

Jeremy Wayne Grunert

Epcot: The Movie - What if Walt's dream had come true?

Randy Amil

Wonders of Life - Once you enter, you'll be transported to a 1980s Epcot Center!

Ashley Lunn Hudspeth

Mount Everest - People trying to find the yeti to prove it exists and they keep running into strange obstacles.

Mike Snowberger

Poseidon's Fury with a final battle scene that doesn't look like a '60s B movie.

Gary S DeMotte

Hall of Presidents - When the Magic Kingdom is overrun by zombies (actual zombies, not tour groups), a group of young, attractive, ethnically diverse cast members realize that

their only hope for survival is to unleash "Operation: Commanders-in-Chief".

The presidential animatronics come to life, complete with accurate personalities and era-appropriate weaponry to save the day. Directed by Robert Rodriguez, I hope.

Jake Wheeler

Cranium Command - You and Captain Buzzy join the Cranium Commandos and are assigned to pilot the brain of a 12 year old boy.

Michael Drozdowski

A large Brazilian tour group boards Horizons in 1990, only to mysteriously disappear without a trace. Years later, they are found on Bravo Centauri by a Mission Space shuttle team led by Gary Sinise. An alternate ending would transport the lost tourists to work on the farms of Mesa Verde.

Matthew Ackerman

Spaceship Earth - A time traveling group travels throughout history due to a malfunction. The group will battle knights, dinosaurs and cavemen as well as visit historical periods like the Renaissance, American Revolution and Ancient Egypt, while trying to get back home.

Ryan Mahaffey

Jungle Cruise - Written as an homage to the screwball comedies of the 1930s, complete

with incorporating the classic spiel and beloved scenes.

Cedric Ching

Mad Tea Party - In the style of Hot Tub Time Machine with a cast of older female Brits.

Kyle Andrew Axile

Horizons - Make it a comedy about a group of young friends who go their separate ways trying to find their societal niches in the different worlds of the future: city, desert, sea, and space.

Lito Michael Morona

Journey Into Your Imagination - The story of a failed institute and the process of finding a purple dragon to return to the attraction.

Dale Hawkes

Manta - A group of marine biologists start a deep sea exploration after a new strain of manta start appearing and growing at an extreme rate. Whilst exploring, they discover a giant underwater world where every species is a giant. "We're gonna need a bigger sub."

Manda Ree

Journey into Imagination - Figment and the Dreamfinder battling against the professor in the imagination lab, who plans on sucking the imagination out of the world in a plot for world domination.

Mells Phillips

Jungle Cruise - A period piece comedy about a completely

incompetent boating company providing tours for tourists. The skippers aren't informed of anything about where they are and constantly get facts like river names incorrect.

Matthew Godridge

Space Mountain - It's really a NASA experiment to see who could be picked for secret space missions to save the galaxy.

Peter McGuire

The Great Movie Ride - A Christmas Carol-like film where a screenwriter lives through old classic movies and learns the old key to making motion pictures and why they are considered masterpieces.

Angel McAteer Stanton

The Enchanted Tiki Room - All of these birds are from different places. What made them flock together in Walt Disney World? It would make for a cute animated movie! It could totally include all of the Disney birds!

Josh Melamed

Kilimanjaro Safari - A Safari in Africa that goes terrible wrong and they get stranded for days.

Jen Tremley

Kitchen Kabaret - Spreading the word about good nutrition and health! Veggie, Veggie, Fruit, Fruit!





Then and Now

New View Down Hollywood Boulevard

January and February guests watched as the giant Sorcerer's Hat was demolished piece by piece at Disney's Hollywood Studios. When looking down Hollywood Boulevard, guests now have a view of the Chinese Theater facade (The Great Movie Ride), just as they did before the hat was built in 2001. Many Disney fans have only known the park with the Sorcerer's Hat, but other

longtime fans haven't been happy with its placement, and wanted the former view of the Chinese Theater to return.

As of press time, construction walls were still up around the base of the area while they do ground work, but it should be all done by the start of Star Wars Weekends.

BEFORE...



PHOTO BY JEFF LANGE

THEN...



NOW...

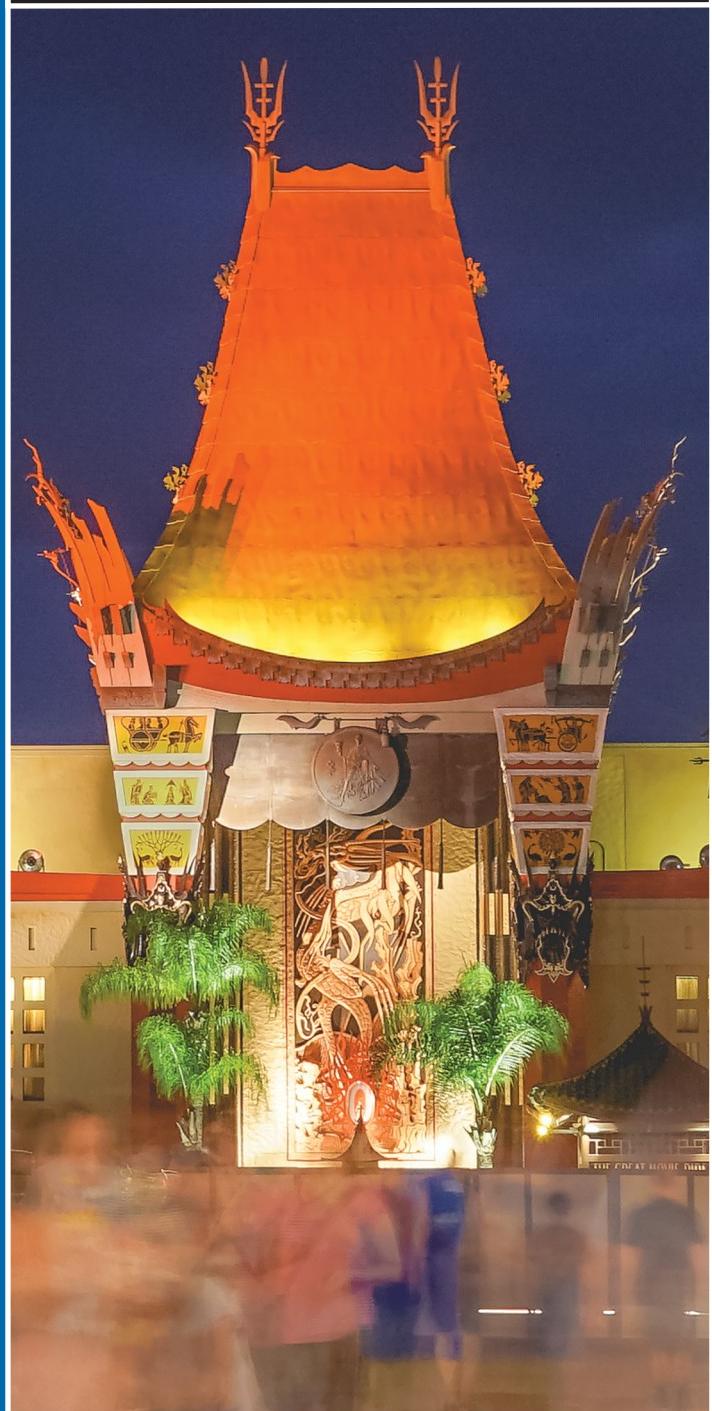


PHOTO BY BENJAMIN THOMPSON



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Vacation Planner



By Anthony Armenia

BUSCH GARDENS FOOD & WINE FESTIVAL

Location: Busch Gardens Tampa

Dates: Every Saturday and Sunday, March 7 through April 26

Cost: Included with theme park admission

Busch Gardens is introducing some flavor to its event line up. The inaugural Food & Wine Festival will offer a variety of wild flavors, more than 65 fine wines, 50 craft brews and entertainment. Concerts include performances by Fifth Harmony, Pentatonix and Kool & The Gang.



Busch Gardens.
Food & Wine
FESTIVAL



VIVA LA MUSICA

Location: SeaWorld Orlando

Dates: Every Saturday from

April 25 through May 16

Cost: Included with theme park admission

Join the fiesta featuring live Latin music performed by award-winning artists, savory Latin cuisine and authentic arts and crafts – all in an authentic Hispanic festival for the entire family.

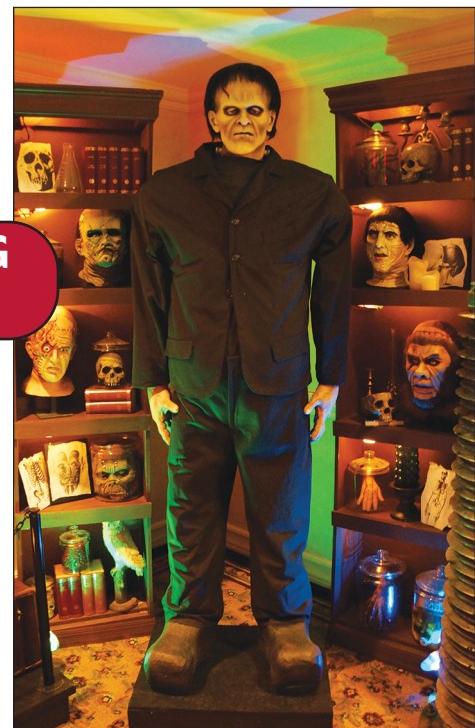
SPOOKY EMPIRE FEATURING HALLOWEEN EXTREME

Location: DoubleTree at Universal Studios

Dates: May 15 through 17

Cost: Varies from \$45 to \$75

Celebrate everything horror, haunt and Halloween at Spooky Empire and Halloween Extreme. This annual event features lots of celebrities from hit shows like "American Horror Story" and "The Walking Dead" and movies such as "Alien" and "Ghostbusters". The event also has a tattoo festival, seminars, panels, memorabilia and special events.



We've chosen our favorite upcoming events to spotlight. You don't want to miss them on your next trip to Orlando.

All events and dates are subject to change. Please check with the proper organization before attending.

Check our calendar section at AttractionsMagazine.com for up-to-date happenings in the Orlando area.

STAR WARS WEEKENDS

Location: Disney's Hollywood Studios

Dates: Every Friday, Saturday and Sunday from May 15 through June 14

Cost: Included with theme park admission

Join the celebration of the Star Wars franchise featuring a parade, celebrity meets, memorabilia, character meets and presentations. Don't forget about the special character dining options and nightly Star Wars themed fireworks finale that will light up the night!



21ST ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL FLOWER & GARDEN FESTIVAL

Location: Epcot

Dates: March 4 through May 17

Cost: Included with theme park admission

Debuting at this year's festival, look for topiaries themed after "Frozen" featuring Anna and Elsa. The event will also feature the return of the food and drink outdoor kitchens with new items as well as returning favorites. Also be sure to check out the Butterfly House and Disney movie characters throughout the park in playgrounds and as topiaries. This year's festival will showcase more than 100 topiaries, live music by artists such as Pablo Cruise and The Village People, educational programs, unique shopping and more.



CONTACT INFORMATION

Busch Gardens Tampa
BuschGardensTampa.com
(888) 800-5447

SeaWorld Orlando
seaworld.com/orlando
(800) 327-2424

Spooky Empire
spookyempire.com
(954) 258-7852

Walt Disney World Resort
disneyworld.com
(407) 939-6244

Work in Progress ?

By Anthony Armenia

STATUS: NOW OPEN

Go On An Aerial Adventure

LOCATION: KISSIMMEE

Featuring zip lines, swings, rope courses, bridges and obstacles through a forest, Orlando Tree Trek Adventure Park is an outdoor family adventure. The courses are color coded and progressively become more difficult and are designed to challenge both the mind and body alike. Just be sure to allow two or three hours to complete it and we recommend you make reservations.



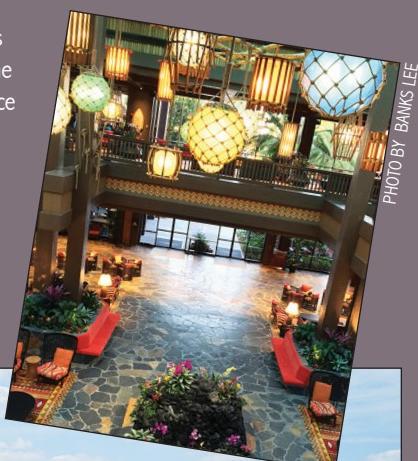
STATUS: FINISHING SOON

Polynesian Renovations Continue

LOCATION: DISNEY'S POLYNESIAN VILLAGE

RESORT

As part of the extensive remodel of the resort, a newly renovated lobby has been revealed featuring a more open modern look. It replaces the giant fountain in the middle and adds more seating and chandeliers. Also new to the resort is Pineapple Lanai, a quick service home to Dole Whip, replacing the self service one at Capt. Cooks. The Polynesian also plans to add Trader Sam's Grog Grotto soon. It's a highly-themed lounge featuring tiki cocktails and Polynesia-themed small plates. The Disney Vacation Club bungalows will also open later this spring.



STATUS: IN THE PLANNING STAGES

Ready For The World's Tallest Drop Ride?

LOCATION: SKYPLEX AT INTERNATIONAL DRIVE

The skyline around International Drive is going to be changing dramatically over the next several years with the additions of the world's tallest roller coaster, The Orlando Eye, StarFlyer swing ride, and recently announced, a drop tower. Skyfall will be the newest record breaker when it opens in 2017. Mounted on the side of the Skyscraper roller coaster, Skyfall will take riders 450 feet into the air before dropping them back down toward the ground.



STATUS: OPEN/COMING SOON

Starbucks Expands Into Hollywood Studios

LOCATION: WALT DISNEY WORLD RESORT

The newest Starbucks location is now open at Disney's Hollywood Studios. Located on the corner of Hollywood Boulevard and Sunset Boulevard, The Trolley Car Cafe is themed as a classic trolley car station. With the opening of this location, there is only one Starbucks left to open at Walt Disney World, in Disney's Animal Kingdom. It's expected to open this summer.



STATUS: NOW OPEN

Pandora Comes To Main Street U.S.A.

LOCATION: MAGIC KINGDOM

With a partnership between Pandora Jewelry and Disney, a new Pandora store-within-a-store has opened in Uptown Jewelers. The store features Disney-themed jewelry collections featuring Disney characters and more in 25 different styles with 16 Disney Parks exclusive styles. Pandora is also now sponsoring the Wishes fireworks show at Magic Kingdom.



PHOTO BY BANKS LEE

STATUS: UNDER CONSTRUCTION

Hub Remodel Continues

LOCATION: MAGIC KINGDOM PARK

It's been 11 months since Disney announced plans to remodel the Hub area and it is finally shaping up. Once completed, several new elements will be added, including sculpted gardens, additional pathways, expanded restaurant seating and a new viewing area for fireworks and parades. The project should be complete sometime this year.



STATUS: CLOSED

No More Prizes For Tickets

LOCATION: WALT DISNEY WORLD

The Tomorrowland Light & Power Co. arcade at the exit to Space Mountain in the Magic Kingdom has closed. This goes along with the Walt Disney World Resort arcades getting rid of their ticket games and redemption counters. Disney hasn't said why the ticket games are being removed or why the Tomorrowland Light & Power Co. arcade has closed other than, "we are always evaluating our offerings and making adjustments". It's thought to have closed so the games there could be moved to the resort arcades as a replacement for the ticket games. There's no word on what will be done with the Tomorrowland Light & Power Co. arcade space. Speculation says Disney is being extra careful to avoid violating Florida state's legislation banning Internet cafes. The law states that you can't win prizes worth more than 75 cents, and that the games need to be coin operated.



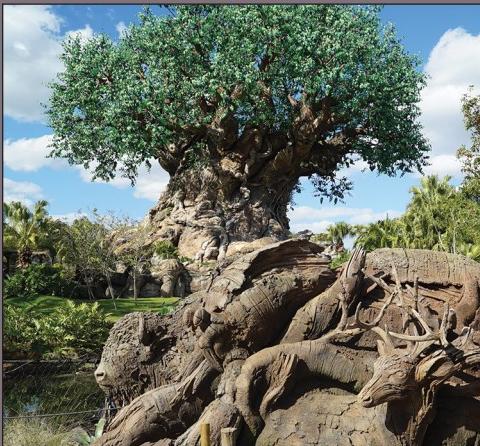
Work in Progress ?

STATUS: REFURBISHED

Tree Of Life Roots Expanded

LOCATION: DISNEY'S ANIMAL KINGDOM

Construction walls recently came down to reveal new Tree of Life roots featuring animal sculptures and a widened area on Discovery Island. More enchantments are coming to the park in the near future including a new nighttime show, various entertainment and the new Avatar area.



STATUS: CLOSING SOON

No More Speeding At Disney

LOCATION: WALT DISNEY WORLD RESORT

Disney is closing their Speedway on July 1, which means Richard Petty's Driving Experience and the Exotic Driving Experience will be closing their locations there as well. Disney says they will be making transportation modifications.



STATUS: BEING REFURBISHED

Dragons Invade Pantopia

LOCATION: BUSCH GARDENS TAMPA

Renovations at Pantopia Grill are well underway and it will reopen as Dragonfire Grill later this year. While the stage, seating area and full-service bar will remain the same, the new Dragonfire Grill will transform its food service lines into a variety of food stations offering Italian, American, Mexican and Asian cuisines. There will also be a new grab-and-go station featuring Starbucks and a new craft beer lineup.



STATUS: IN THE PLANNING STAGES

Go Snowboarding, Skiing and Surfing

LOCATION: KISSIMMEE

A new \$309 million action sports and entertainment resort is planned down the street from Walt Disney World. Xero Gravity Action Sports hopes to develop this new park on 75 acres near U.S. Route 192 and State Road 535. The resort would have a 14-story ski and snowboard mountain, five acres of real surfing, an indoor skateboard park, BMX race track, rapid river, wave pool, zip lining and more. It is planned to open in early 2018.



STATUS: NOW CLOSED

Gwazi Has Its Last Riders

LOCATION:

BUSCH GARDENS TAMPA

Opened in 1999 as Florida's first dueling wooden coaster, Gwazi has been retired as of Feb. 1. The ride became more and more rough over the years, even with the addition of the new Millennium Flyer trains in 2011. No decisions have been announced about what lies ahead for that area.



STATUS: COMING SOON

Gators Invading Fun Spot

LOCATION: FUN SPOT AMERICA

Guests will soon have the opportunity to meet live alligators, birds and more thanks to a new partnership with Gatorland. When construction is complete sometime this spring, the new interactive area will feature an array of alligators including giant gators, white gators and crocs. There will be a small cost to enter this area.



Work in Progress



STATUS: COMING SOON

Lego 'Friends' Land Coming to Legoland

LOCATION: LEGOLAND FLORIDA

A new Lego Friends area of the park named "Heartlake City" will open this summer featuring a horse themed disc coaster called "Mia's Riding Adventure" and an interactive show called "Friends to the Rescue". There will also be new shops inside the Heartlake Mall. The Legoland Hotel has also announced May 15 as their opening day.



STATUS: NOW SERVING

Hot Butterbeer Now Available

LOCATION: UNIVERSAL ORLANDO RESORT

A new option in Butterbeer is now available, along with the cold, frozen and ice cream. Hot Butterbeer is now being served at The Wizarding World of Harry Potter. In Diagon Alley, it is served at Leaky Cauldron, The Hopping Pot and The Fountain of Fair Fortune. In Hogsmeade, it is available at Three Broomsticks and Hog's Head Pub.



NEW SPONSOR

Great Movie Ride's Getting A New Ending

LOCATION: DISNEY'S HOLLYWOOD STUDIOS

The Great Movie Ride is getting a new sponsor as well as a few updates. Turner

Classic Movies (TCM) cable channel has partnered with Disney to update the queue and finale montage. TCM branding will be integrated into the attraction's marquee as well as banners, posters and display windows outside the attraction. In the queue, guests will enjoy new digital movie posters and a new pre-ride video with TCM host, Robert Osborne. The finale will feature an all-new montage of classic movie moments. After guests exit the attraction, they will have a photo-op with a classic movie theme. The updates are planned to be launched any day now.



STATUS: OPENING SOON

I-Drive 360 Attractions To Open May 4

LOCATION: INTERNATIONAL DRIVE

Merlin Entertainment has announced that The Orlando Eye, Sea Life Orlando Aquarium and Madame Tussauds Orlando will open on May 4. The Orlando Eye will be the centerpiece of the new I-Drive 360 complex, which will also house many stores, restaurants, and a skeleton museum. Tickets to each attraction start at \$25 for adults and \$20 for children 12 and under. However, combination tickets are available for multiple attractions.



STATUS: RISING UP

Kongstruction Updates

LOCATION:

ISLANDS

OF ADVENTURE

Construction is picking up between Toon Lagoon and Jurassic Park with a show building rising above the tree tops and steel beams sticking out from it. While not much is known about the construction project, speculation points to a long time rumor of a King Kong themed Skull Island. Universal hasn't made any official announcements.



STATUS: COMING SOON

New Stores, Bridge And Eateries Come To Downtown Disney

LOCATION: DOWNTOWN DISNEY

As Downtown Disney continues its transformation into Disney Springs and construction on The Landing area begins to finish, several new stores have opened their doors. These include Chapel Hats, APEX by Sunglass Hut, The Art of Shaving, Erin McKenna's Bakery NYC, Havaianas flip-flops, Sanuk footwear and Sound Lion. Over in the Marketplace, a new bridge is now open offering guests a shortcut from the Lego Imagination Center area over to the Rainforest Cafe area. When complete in 2016, Disney Springs will double the shopping, dining and entertainment experiences themed to Florida's waterfront towns and natural beauty.



Photo Finds

Orlando is always filled with fun things to see and our photographers are there to capture it all. Visit our Website for videos and a gallery of more photos. AttractionsMagazine.com



PHOTO BY BANKS LEE



The Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex added some new attractions this past holiday season. **Holidays in Space** featured a Rocket Garden choreographed light and music show and a **3D projection** show on the side of the 223-foot-long **Saturn 1B rocket**.





The second annual “**A Celebration of Harry Potter**” was held the last weekend in January at **Universal Studios Florida**. The event featured an **expo** with lots of movie props on display, and talks with some of the **stars**. From left are Michael Gambon (Dumbledore), Evanna Lynch (Luna Lovegood), and James and Oliver Phelps (Weasley twins) inside the Leaky Cauldron restaurant.



For four days in February, the **White Castle food truck** visited both **Fun Spot** locations (two days at each). The turn-out was huge! Fans who wanted to satisfy their cravings lined up for as long as 10 hours just to get some sliders. Because of the high demand, it’s possible a permanent White Castle location may come to Fun Spot.



During late December and early January, the carriage from the new live-action “**Cinderella**” movie made appearances before the Festival of Fantasy Parade at the Magic Kingdom. Then from February to April, the coach was parked on the Streets of America at **Disney’s Hollywood Studios**. Guests lined up to get their photo taken in front of the carriage. It is 10 feet tall, 17 feet long and decked out in gold leaf.

SHAMU'S HAPPY HARBOR VS. WOODY WOODPECKER'S KIDZONE

Happy Harbor at SeaWorld Orlando and KidZone at Universal Studios Florida are the only two full kids theme park lands in Orlando.

Both are great for kids but they each have their advantages. Let's take a look.

RIDES



Excluding E.T. (which is part of KidZone but was there before the area was built), KidZone only has two rides kids can enjoy. But Happy Harbor features several, including Jazzy Jellies, Ocean Commotion and Swishy Fishies.

ENTERTAINMENT



Every now and then a street show will take place inside Happy Harbor, but KidZone is home to A Day in the Park with Barney and Animal Actors on Location. Other characters can also be found performing in KidZone at certain times of the year.

BEAT THE HEAT



Looking for a way to cool off during the hot summer months? KidZone features indoor locations like gift shops, an indoor ball play area and a show, as well as a water slide and large water play area. Happy Harbor is an all outdoor location. But it does have a water play area for small kids.

PLAYGROUNDS



Even though Happy Harbor has a giant net climb for guests young and old, KidZone features four different areas, including playgrounds based on Fievel, Barney and Curious George.

COASTER



Both Happy Harbor and KidZone feature a family coaster, one themed to Shamu and the other to Woody Woodpecker. While KidZone's coaster offers some fun themes, Happy Harbor's is a little longer and more thrilling, plus they have an on-ride photo you can purchase.

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Jim Korkis Puts the Pieces of Disney's Jigsaw Puzzle History Together

By M.N. Corbisiero

History is essentially storytelling, and Disney's extensive history is tangled and multifaceted. Fortunately, Jim Korkis has been entrenched in the company's fascinating past. He's best known as a Disney historian and the author of several Disney books including "The Book of Mouse," "Who's Afraid of the Song of the South," and the popular "The Vault of Walt" series.

Jim moved from the Disneyland area to Orlando in 1995 to take care of his parents and found himself doing a variety of roles for Walt Disney World. He was the off-screen narrator for the short-lived syndicated Disney television series "Secrets of the Animal Kingdom", wrote the text for the 30th anniversary Walt Disney World trading card set, taught classes on animation history and improvisational acting to members of Feature Animation Florida, performed as Merlin the magician at the Magic Kingdom and still continues to write articles for a variety of Disney publications including "Orlando Attractions Magazine" and "Disney Files", the quarterly magazine for the Disney Vacation Club.

What is it about Disney that has compelled you to write and collect stories about the company?

Growing up in Glendale, Calif., I had the opportunity to meet and interview dozens of people who had worked with Walt Disney. I was in the right place at the right time to hear and record these great stories. Unfortunately, many of these people were old, even when I first met them as a teenager. They started passing away and I realized their stories were being lost. I felt an obligation to give them another chance to tell



Jim Korkis as Merlin with his proud dad and mom in fall 1995 at Magic Kingdom. "You were trained to try and make sure both hands were always visible in a photo," said Jim with a laugh. "My parents are both gone now but this is one of my favorite pictures with them."



their version of the Disney story. Disney history is like a giant jigsaw puzzle, but many of the pieces are missing. I hoped that if I shared my pieces, maybe other people would share their pieces, and we would all enjoy a richer perspective of the overall picture.

You've had an assortment of roles within Disney, one of them playing Merlin in the Magic Kingdom. How'd you come upon this opportunity and what did you take away from the experience?

I thought the best entry to the Walt Disney Company for me would be through my performing skills. I got a job doing magic and balloon animals for drunks at Pleasure Island. Then, I got the opportunity in 1995 to be a Streetmosphere character at the Magic Kingdom that was looking to expand upon the popularity of the characters at Disney-MGM Studios. In Frontierland, I was Prospector Pat, an old gold miner who had heard there were riches in Big Thunder Mountain. (Prospector Pete was already a convention character, so I couldn't use that name.) After three months, Disney was so pleased with what I was doing with my interactions with the guests, that I got the opportunity to be the part-time Merlin, doing the Sword in the Stone ceremony in Fantasyland. The full-time Merlin left shortly afterwards to pursue other acting opportunities and I became the full-time Merlin. At the time, the Disney Institute was being developed and with my background in animation (including doing voices and being a recognized animation historian with multiple published articles and books), I got offered a job as a full-time salaried animation instructor, so I transitioned to that role.

Do you have any fun Merlin stories?

Here's one that sticks in my mind. Merlin gave away an expensive and elaborate gold medallion to a child (often a child from Give Kids the World) every performance. There was a back-up just in case there was a problem. On my second week, a very cute brunette came up to me and told me that Merlin was her very favorite character and how good I was in the role and she realized she would never get picked to get the medallion. I gave her the extra, figuring we might hook up after my shift, and she promptly ran and gave it to her boyfriend who was leaning up against Sir Mickey's. As soon as I got backstage, I got a lengthy lecture on the cost of the medallion and more. I only gave away one other extra medallion in all my time as Merlin. I got permission ahead of time and I called up my dad from the audience and had him pull up the sword and gave him the medallion. It hung near his bed, along with the colorful certificate, until his death several years ago.

Of the many roles you've held and projects you've completed with Disney, which one is dearest to you?

Tough question and an impossible one to answer. I enjoyed them all for different reasons. I loved doing Merlin because I could really be a ham and loved interacting with the guests as a Disney character. I loved teaching animation at the Disney Institute and helping with the annual animation festival and having a meal with visiting legends like John Lasseter and Ward Kimball. I enjoyed writing and teaching classes as part of Disney Adult Discoveries and the interactions with guests who really were true Disney fans on programs like Backstage Magic and Innovation in Action. I still get



Among his many roles, Korkis worked as a program designer, trainer and facilitator for Disney Adult Discoveries, the group that did behind-the-scenes tours for guests and convention groups. Here he is teaching Hidden Treasures of World Showcase.

e-mails from young people I worked with as a Coordinator of College and International Programs at Epcot and I definitely loved doing over two hundred different presentations on Disney history for the Disney Learning Centers. I enjoyed them all. I didn't enjoy being unexpectedly laid off, but I tell people you can love the Disney Brand but still have concerns how the Disney business operated.

Given the elongated history of Disney and the entertainment business' penchant for embellishing stories, have you found it difficult to unfurl fact from the fiction?

The Disney Company has always been a company from the beginning that depended on oral history. At the animation studio, if you wanted to know something about Steamboat Willie, you were sent down to talk to Ub Iwerks working in the Special Processes department. Disney was so busy doing things that they never wrote anything down. It never occurred to anyone what would happen if someone retired or died or whatever and they needed the information. In addition, people misremember or sometimes just make up things. Yale Gracey was never supposed to be the owner of the Haunted Mansion. That is a story that cast members at Walt Disney World made up because they didn't know the

real story. Talking with Imagineer X. Atencio, who wrote the headstone about "Master Gracey", he told me it was supposed to be a gag about his good friend. During the time period of the house, the term Master was a diminutive used for a young boy who was not an adult and so could not yet be called Mister. Basically, I just never accept anything at face value and keep digging and digging. I always try to find multiple sources to verify something. Of course, some stories, even if they are untrue, are so good that they just never seem to die no matter how often you debunk them with the truth. So, today, even the Disney Company claims that Gracey is

the master of the mansion.

How do you approach researching a new project?

Sometimes a client will request an article on a particular topic. Sometimes I write about something because I can't find information anywhere else, so I figure if I



Korkis with Margaret Kerry, who was the live action reference model for the character of Tinker Bell in the Disney animated feature Peter Pan.

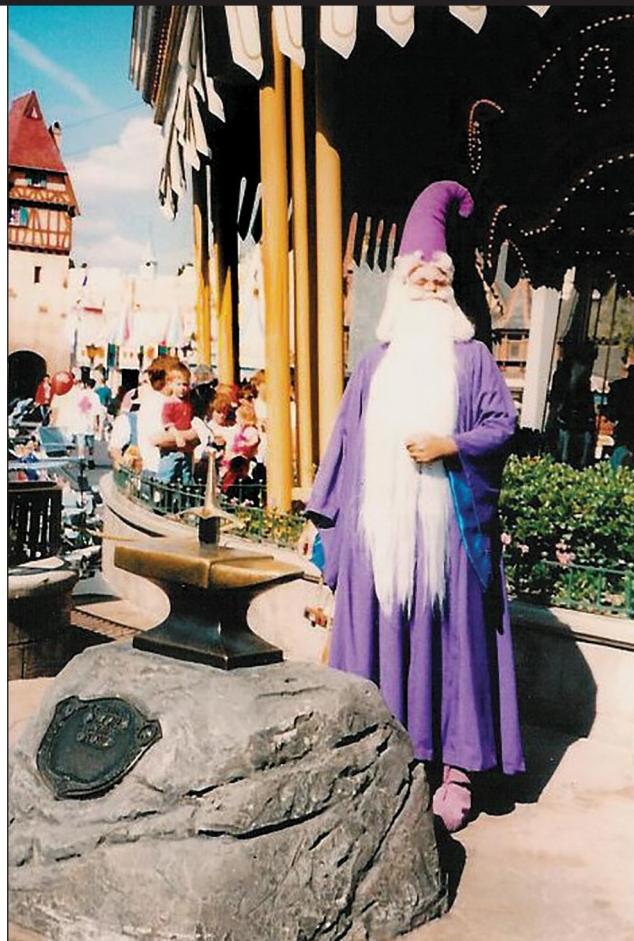
write about it, others may come out of the woodwork with additional information. I schedule in a block of time every day including weekends and holidays to research and write. I treat it like any job. I have an extensive personal library of books and magazines and other documents, but it is often a challenge finding a piece of information. I also have many friends who are experts in particular areas of Disney, from comic books to animation to Disney during World War II to Figment and all sorts of subjects. Fortunately, there are still a handful of "Walt's original cast" still around who I contact. People like cartoonist Floyd Norman or former Disney executives like "Sully" Sullivan have always been kind with their help. I always try to find at least three reliable sources to verify a piece of information before I put it in print. While something on the Internet may springboard me investigating something, I have learned that you should never depend on the Internet as a primary source.

What advice would you give to someone who aspires to work in the many entertainment facets of Disney?

I had the good fortune to work in many different areas of Disney entertainment and my advice would be to get as much experience as you can from doing as many productions as you can under the direction of as many different directors as you can. I came to Disney after having been in over 200 different stage productions, from Gilbert and Sullivan to Chekhov to Shakespeare to musical theater, as well as experience backstage and in performances on television, film and radio. It still took me four different auditions over a period of months to get hired as a performer and that was considered amazingly fast. Equally important to being hired is your attitude. One of the reasons it takes multiple auditions to get hired is so Disney can evaluate your persistence and how you handle rejection. Disney does not have time for divas. They need people who are team players, adaptable and, of course, are professional in terms of showing up early, staying late and knowing what they have to do ... and listen to what people tell them with a smile.

What do you have coming down the pike? Where can our readers read more of your work and stay up to date on your latest happenings?

Currently, I have seven Disney-related books in print that are available from Amazon, as well as the-



Merlin stands by the sword in the stone, looking for a Magic Kingdom guest with the magical touch to pull it out.

meparkpress.com. The books are also prominently displayed at the Disney Family Museum in San Francisco.

I am working on another Disney book that will come out this summer, as well as the fourth edition in The Vault of Walt series of books to be released this fall. I write a weekly column on all things Disney at MousePlanet.com, a monthly column at AllEars.net and a weekly column on animation at Cartoon Research.com. (Editor's Note: Jim also occasionally writes for "Attractions Magazine". See his story about Tomorrowland on page 32 of this issue.) In addition, I do a quarterly column on Disney history for Disney Files, the magazine of the Disney Vacation Club. I just came back from doing a Disney cruise, where I taught students from a university in Iowa how Disney does three-dimensional storytelling, and I have two upcoming presentations for small business groups about how Walt grew a mom-and-pop business to an entertainment empire, and they can do the same.

SKIPPER BEN'S TOP TEN DISNEY AND UNIVERSAL ATTRACTIONS ON THE CHOPPING BLOCK

By "SKIPPER" BEN REBSTOCK

With so much construction going on at Walt Disney World and Universal Orlando, it's pretty obvious we are right in the center of a pretty epic theme park war.

With so many construction walls going up and so many rides coming down to make way for new experiences, I thought I'd take a look at the 10 attractions you should probably visit on your next trip to Orlando. Why? Because they may not be there the next time you visit.

10

Shrek 4-D Universal Studios Florida

Shrek 4-D is still a very enjoyable attraction.

The pre-show might be the best at Universal Studios.

The movie theater seats and 4D effects are still spot-on and wow audiences. But, when the movie you are watching is over a decade old, has been released on DVD, and you can stream it anytime you want on Netflix, well, maybe it's time for an update. Not to mention, three more Shrek films have hit the theaters, along with a spinoff for one of its major characters. Maybe it's time we get an update too. Could we see a new Shrek movie, or is it time for an all-new experience altogether? Only Universal knows for sure.



9

Journey Into Imagination With Figment and Captain EO Epcot

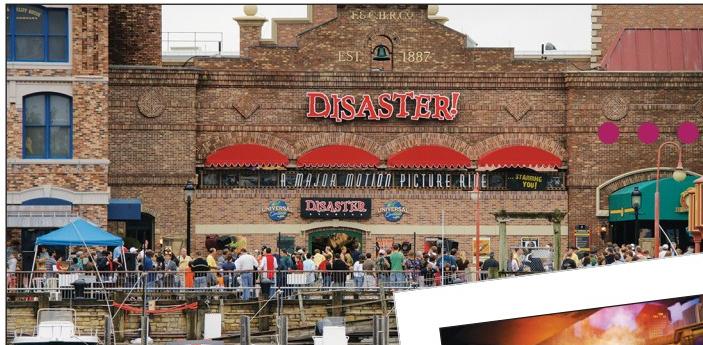
This attraction has just never clicked. Sure, this version is much better than the one that completely removed Figment in 1999, but since the update in 2002 reinstalled our favorite purple dragon, this corner of Epcot has been a ghost town. You probably have old memories, like myself, about the near endless queue you had to go through before you could see Dreamfinder on the original version of this attraction, but those days are long gone. And while we are at it, Captain EO, as classic as it may be, needs to make way for a new experience. You can bet Imagineers have their eyes on this large theater. The Imagination pavilion is a shell of its former self (remember upstairs in the Image Works? Yeah, me neither.) and it's time for something fresh and new to finally hit the glass pyramids.

Muppet*Vision 3D and Lights, Motors, Action! Extreme Stunt Show

Disney's Hollywood Studios

These two are placed together because of the mass uncertainty coming to the Disney's Hollywood Studios. Is Star Wars going to take over the entire left side of the park? Will the Muppet Courtyard's close proximity to Star Tours and Endor put Muppet*Vision 3D on the endangered attractions list? And with the Backlot Tour officially closed, will new attractions from Paris take out this old attraction from Paris if the rumored Pixar Place expansion takes over the back of the park? I might be a little too close to the situation from my past as a Disney-MGM Studios cast member, but if it were up to me, Muppet*Vision would continue to entertain fans of Jim Henson for years, while the stunt show moves out of the way for Buzz, Woody and the Toy Story gang.

8



6

Terminator 2: 3-D

Universal Studios Florida

Another great attraction ... that is way past its prime. The movie opened in 1996 and this was considered one of the best theme park attractions in the world for many years after. But, the Terminator franchise has taken many twists and turns since then, while this attraction stood still.

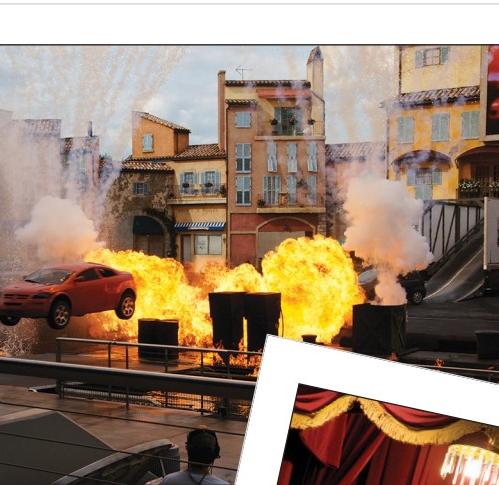
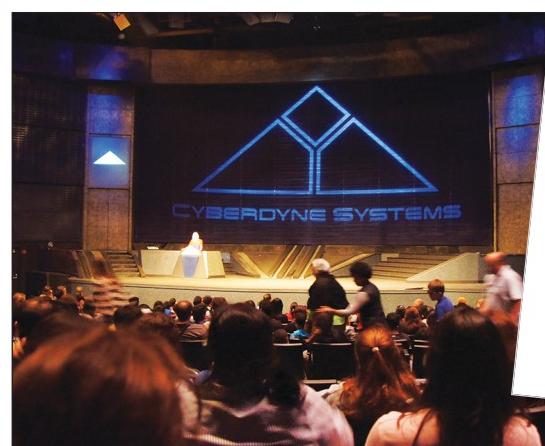
Terminator 2: 3-D closed at Universal Studios Hollywood last year and was replaced by a two-theater version of Despicable Me Minion Mayhem. Florida already has a minion ride, but this is the last corner of the park that has not had a new attraction in nearly 20 years. It might be time for traffic to start flowing this way again with a new attraction.

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7

Disaster!

Universal Studios Florida

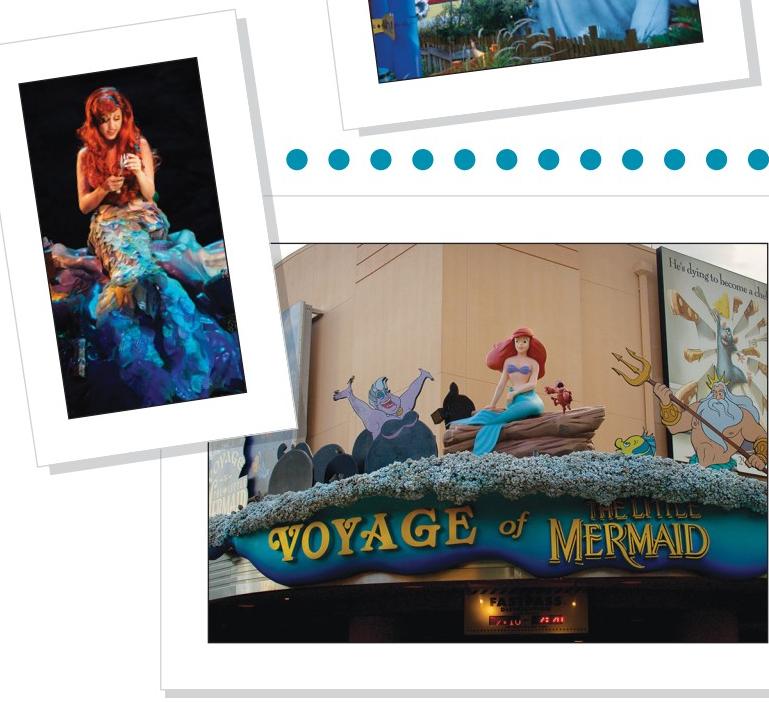
Don't get me wrong, I'm actually a big fan of the update of this attraction. The technology in the pre-show is amazing. The inclusion of Christopher Walken and (spoiler alert) The Rock is hysterical, but the main part of this attraction is, frankly, just old and dated. The "earthquake" sequence is still the same version of the ride that opened in 1990. And considering how much space this attraction takes up in a very popular area of the park where every inch counts, we could be getting close to our final chance to star in "Mutha Nature."

Soarin'

Epcot

This one is a bit of a technicality. We all know something new has been filmed and after it debuts at Shanghai Disneyland, some version of it will end up at Epcot despite no official word coming from Disney. Will this be "Soarin' Over the World?" Will it only feature landmarks from the United States? We don't know, but if you are a fan of the current film for this attraction, you might want to take as many flights over orange groves and surfers as you can on your next trip.

5



4

Curious George Goes To Town and Fievel's Playland

Universal Studios Florida

This is an area of the park that has come under much speculation over the last couple of years. I find this corner of the park to be very underrated, especially for families with young children. The attractions are a lot of fun, but very dated. The Fievel playground is based on the "An American Tale" sequel that was released in 1991 (and hasn't been relevant since). Curious George did have a recent live-action movie, but the character is only mildly popular compared to other pop-culture giant cartoons today. The big question is, can this park afford to lose its only family-friendly attractions? Will they replace it with more kids rides or another mega thrill ride?

3

Voyage of the Little Mermaid

Disney's Hollywood Studios

How long can a temporary stage show stay in a park? Evidently, more than 20 years. Ariel and her friends still find themselves performing daily in the Animation Courtyard. But now, with a new multi-million dollar dark ride that basically tells the same exact story open at the Magic Kingdom, is there a need for this show? In a park that is desperate for new attractions, we could be seeing the final days of this production.

Poseidon's

Fury

Universal's Islands of Adventure

2



Stitch's Great Escape

Magic Kingdom

It's the attraction everyone loves to kick. The consistent five minute wait times, even on busy days, proves that people just don't want chili dogs burped in their face. And with its prime location at the entrance to Tomorrowland, it's time Imagineers admit to their mistake and finally replace Stitch's Great Escape. Tomorrowland hasn't had a new attraction since 2007, and with other parts of the park getting their attention, Disney could set their sights on Stitch soon and remove this dud. A decade of Stitch is more than enough. No attraction in Orlando screams "replace me" more than this one. So be sure to check it out one more time on your next trip, if you must.

1

• • • •



Skipper Ben is a former Walt Disney World cast member.

He worked at Jungle Cruise, Muppet*Vision 3D and as a producer for Radio Disney. He now resides in Dallas, Texas, with his wife Lisa (also a former cast member) and daughters Abigail Lily and Alayna Iris.

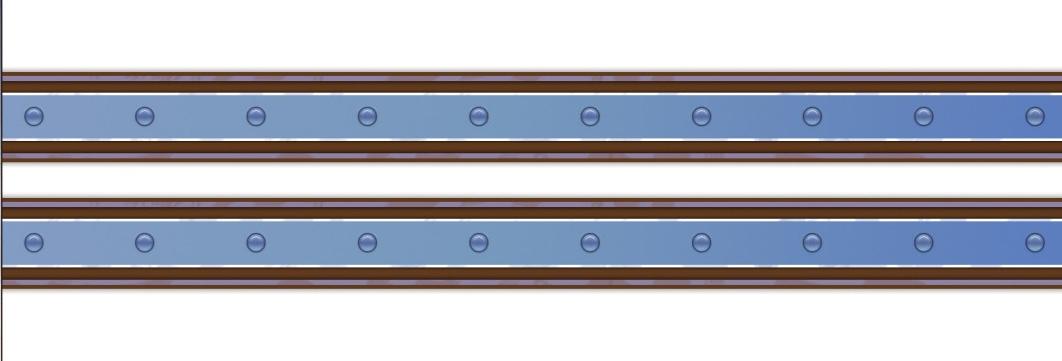
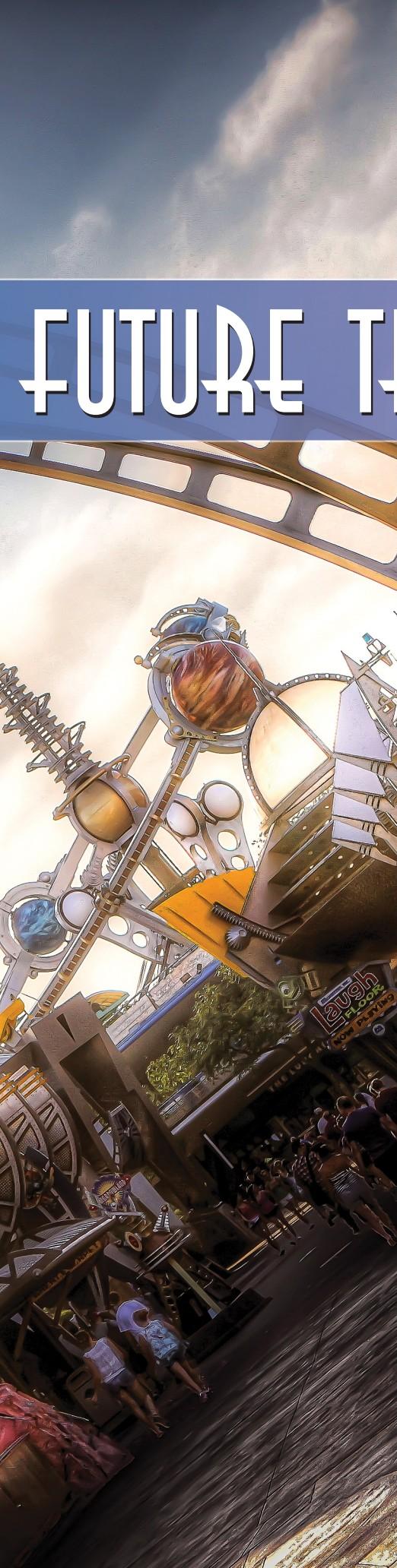
Do you agree with Ben or have a suggestion for a future Top 10?

Let us know at info@attractionsmagazine.com



A low-angle, perspective photograph looking up at the Tomorrowland sign and the track of the Space Mountain roller coaster at Disney's Magic Kingdom. The sign is a large, illuminated globe with "Tomorrowland" written across it in a stylized font. The roller coaster track is a complex, multi-layered structure of brown and blue metal beams. In the foreground, there are red, rocky structures and a yellow support beam. The background shows a clear blue sky with some clouds.

THE



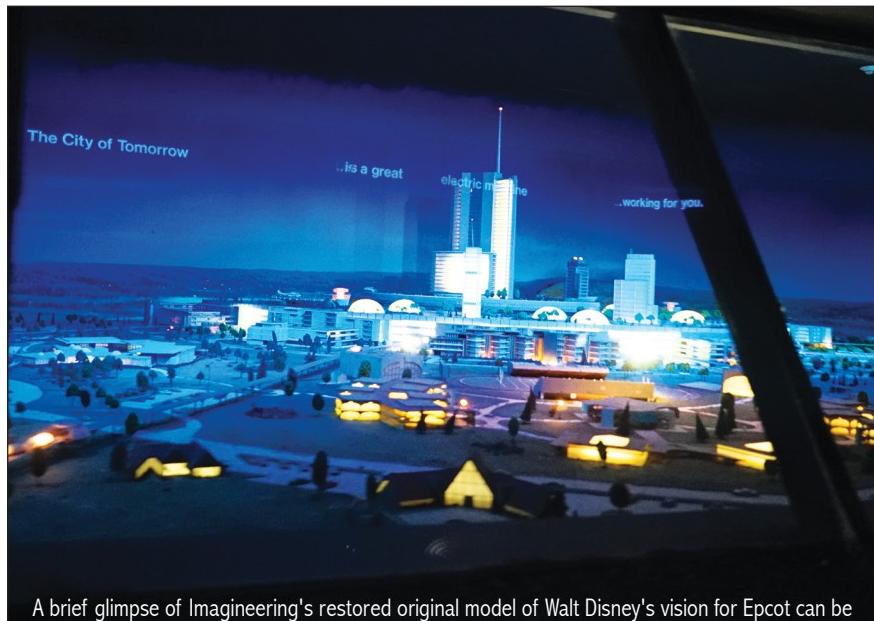
FUTURE THAT NEVER WAS

The Story of Walt Disney World's Tomorrowland

By Jim Korkis

In the Magic Kingdom's Tomorrowland, the story of the future actually begins in the past.

While Walt Disney was fascinated with the future and the newest technological advances, he was not a science fiction fan. Walt's vision of the future was inspired by the 1939 New York World's Fair depiction of the World of Tomorrow, the future that could actually happen in the next three decades.



A brief glimpse of Imagineering's restored original model of Walt Disney's vision for Epcot can be seen from the Tomorrowland Transit Authority PeopleMover.

PHOTO BY JACK CROUSE



Starport Seven-Five, a reference to the official debut of the attraction in 1975, is the official name of the attraction commonly known as Space Mountain.

Walt's original Tomorrowland at Disneyland featured no flying saucers, sparking ray guns or bug-eyed monsters, but instead offered a simulated flight to the moon based on authentic scientific information supplied by scientists like Wernher Von Braun and Willy Ley.

When Tomorrowland opened at Walt Disney World on Oct. 1, 1971, the only

attractions operating that first day were the beloved Skyway to Fantasyland and the Grand Prix Raceway. It was not much of a future.

It wasn't until four years later in 1975 that Tomorrowland had grown into the area that most Disney fans remember with the addition of attractions like the WEDWay PeopleMover, Carousel of Progress (featuring the Sherman Brothers song, "Now is the Time") and of course, Space Mountain, that was intended to serve as the space port hub for the land.

However, the future always caught up with Tomorrowland too quickly, making it look quaint rather than innovative no matter how often it changed.

For the Disney Imagineers, the solution was to make Tomorrowland "the future that never was". It would be the future that resembled the



The Chamber of Commerce post at the entrance of Tomorrowland promotes the many organizations operating in this future metropolis.

one predicted in all the science fiction magazines and movies of the early 20th century. It would be a timeless future that would never be out of date.

In 1994, Magic Kingdom's Tomorrowland was transformed into that playful and optimistic vision of the future that still entertains two decades later.

ENTER THE CITY OF TOMORROW

Entering Tomorrowland, guests are not just in the future, but in a hometown community like Main Street U.S.A. that serves as a galactic space port. In keeping with the theme that this is a city of the future, at the entrance is a huge sign from the Tomorrowland Chamber of Commerce that welcomes guests with its motto: "The Future That Never Was Is Finally Here".

This is a metropolis where humans intermingle with aliens and robots and is the headquarters for the League of Planets. This future main street is officially known as the Avenue of the Planets. As in many



Stay up-to-date with all the latest news in the Galaxy Gazette newspaper from a friendly Robo-Newz vendor.



Stitch escaped and ended up poking through the ceiling of The Merchant of Venus merchandise shop.

cities, there is a Chamber of Commerce posting at the entrance, but without the shields of the more familiar Lions Club or Kiwanis organizations.

Instead, there are colorful emblem logos representing The League of Planets, The Loyal Order of Little Green Beings, Galactic Association of Retired Aliens and the Sleepless Knights of the Milky Way. That's "knights" with a "k" and it brings to mind the fraternal organization, the Knights of Columbus, as well as the mighty heroic warriors that sometimes filled the pages of science fiction pulp magazines of the 1930s as well as the fact that a person can't sleep at night in the Milky Way because all those darn stars are shining so brightly all the time.

On the buildings are posters for the Tomorrowland Towers Hover Hotel (three miles directly above Tomorrowland on the Atmosphere Three Skyway Exit), Leonard Burnedstar who will be conducting the Martian Pops Orchestra, the Space Home and Garden Show and the Antique Rocket Show and Swoop Meet (that will feature

the fabled Moonliner from Disneyland's past).

All of these clever details suggest there is a much larger community than what guests will be able to see and experience during their visit. At one time there was even a poster for "Lunar Disneyland—The Happiest Place Off Earth".

In 1995, the attraction building to the left of the entrance became the InterPlanetary Convention Center with additional advertising inside about upcoming community events and a demonstration of the latest in teleportation technology from X-S Tech. The ExtraTERRORestrial Alien Encounter was a frightening interactive experience of what happens when people trust in untested technology.

In 2004, the building was converted into the Galactic Federation Prisoner Teleportation Center to handle "undesirables". Using the same teleportation equipment as X-S Tech, guests see a demonstration of how convicted prisoners are teleported away from this city of tomorrow.

Inside is the infamous and mischievous

Stitch from the popular 2002 Disney animated feature that was made by Disney Feature Animation Florida. Of course, something goes horribly wrong and Stitch escapes. But that comes as no surprise since the attraction is named Stitch's Great Escape.

Not only has Stitch escaped to plague the guests in their seats, but he has burst through the ceiling of the nearby merchandise shop, The Merchant of Venus, and the ceiling is covered with his distinctive footprints.

Along the sides of the shop walls are "faux" windows revealing Tomorrowland overflowing with Stitch's many cousins, introduced to audiences in the Disney



It is important to always look your best using the latest in technology, even in the future that never was.



Tomorrowland is decorated with imaginative posters advertising the variety of services available in the world of tomorrow.



Mickey's Star Traders store includes a massive cartoon mural depicting Stitch's escape and other amusing moments often overlooked by guests.

Channel television series and made-for-video sequels based on the original film. One of those cousins is even happily wearing Mickey Mouse ears!

Using the same unreliable teleportation technology, the Merchant of Venus (a humorous pun on Shakespeare's famous "Merchant of Venice" play) is laced with blue cable coils from the ceiling that con-

nect to collection orbs atop the fixtures so quality goods from throughout the universe can materialize in these mini teleport chambers.

Stitch has even invaded Mickey's Star Traders just down the block. A huge mural with seven hidden Mickeys encircles the ceiling. It details the escape from the city of a screaming Stitch as well as Jumba and Pleakley's ship in hot pursuit, besides some other surprises.

Unlike the Merchant of Venus, Mickey's Star Traders does not use teleportation technology to stock its shelves, but it is apparent the owners do indeed purchase their wares through a variety of sources, including goods brought in by spacecraft.

The Merchant of Venus and Mickey's Star Traders merchandise shops theme into the concept that any community, even one in the future, would need a variety of businesses and services like shops and dining options for the residents and visitors.

Quick serve locations like Auntie Gravity's Galactic Goodies and the Lurching Pad provide simple snacks for a world constantly in motion.

A FUTURE METROPOLIS

Back at the entrance to Tomorrowland in 1994, the building on the right was the Tomorrowland Metropolis Science Center featuring a demonstration by The



The Galactic Communications Network (GCN) Metaphone booth lets park guests hear hilarious themed messages.

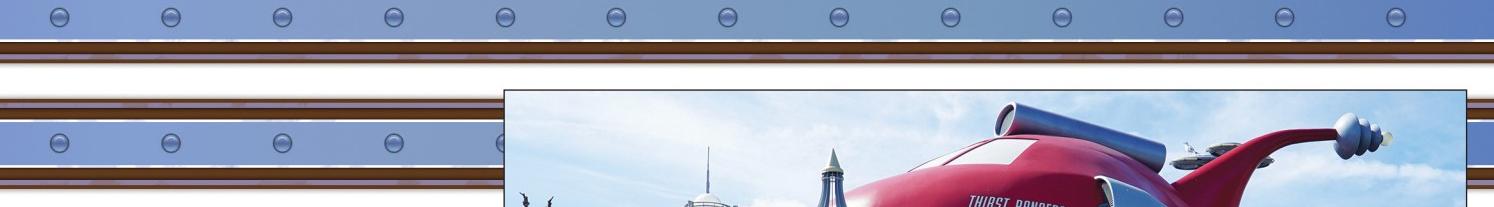
Timekeeper about time travel. Today, that building is the home of the Tomorrowland Expo Center hosting The Monsters Inc. Laugh Floor comedy club that opened in April 2007.

Walking down the main street of the Avenue of the Planets, guests find themselves in the central hub of Rockettower Plaza. The pavement has patterns of orbital paths and planetary shapes and a variety of colors. It is a bustling area that allows easy access to all areas of the city and is home to the Tomorrowland Transit Authority (TTA) that was renamed the Tomorrowland Transit Authority PeopleMover in 2010 in homage to its original 1975 title of WEDWay PeopleMover. This attraction serves as an urban mass transit system for the citizens and visitors to this popular space port.

The Blue Line provided intra-city service to destinations throughout the city from a beauty parlor to a merchandise shop. It was also the delivery method for businesses like Earth Crust Pizza. The unseen Green Line was for commuting to the Hoverburbs and the unseen Red Line took riders off the planet to other destinations in the galaxy.

One of the treasures on the attraction is a small glimpse of the past representing Walt Disney's vision of the future. It is the display model of Walt Disney's original concept for an Epcot-like city that was on the upper level post show for Disneyland's Carousel of Progress for many years. This is only a small part of Walt's model which was originally 115 feet wide and 60 feet deep with 2,500 moving vehicles, 20,000 trees and 4,500 structures. Walt insisted the interior of the buildings be finished, furnished and lit.

In 1994, the Star Jets attraction was updated and renamed Astro Orbiter. The huge central rocket was replaced by a highly stylized iron-work tower along with various planets on the outside of the attraction so it seems like the rockets were weaving between the planets. The new storyline is that the League of Planets was giving inex-



perienced pilots an opportunity to learn how to fly their own rocket ship.

It's easy to get lost in the future so there is a huge black spinning globe at the entrance to the plaza that is a map to the universe. It shows all the routes including Route 88, 44 and 5 but, most importantly, Route 66. There are other symbols on this massive globe as well, including where the nearest gas stations are to fill up your ship and the nearest Metaphone booth.

Nearby is an actual Metaphone booth from the Galactic Communications Network (GCN). As it states on the phone: "Bringing the World Closer Together. Toll Free From Anywhere in the Galaxy." Since 1999, punching several numbers will bring up one of nine possible hilarious one-sided conversations from Rocket Realty, Sonny Eclipse's agent Johnny Jupiter, Earth Crust Pizza (delivering anywhere in the Solar System in less than two light years or your order is free), Intergalactic Movie Line (with information on the movie "Attack of the 50 Foot Earthling"), Psychic Robots Network and more.

By the entrance to the TTA PeopleMover is a robot newsboy selling his newspapers. The Robo-Newz vendor is always up-to-the-minute and supposedly guests can get their daily paper printed "while u wait". The main case shows that the latest physical newspaper is a copy of the Galaxy Gazette with its headline: "Stitch Escapes!"

The Thirst Rangers in their red and white rocket ship are perched high on a landing platform to deliver refreshment to a Thirsty Galaxy. The Disney Imagineers created this spaceship out of the hull of the Trimaxian Drone Ship from the 1986 Disney film, "Flight of the Navigator" that was originally on view for several years in the boneyard on the backstage tour at Disney-MGM Studios. At the bottom of the platform are gray crates with images of a Coca-Cola bottle and amusing shipping labels.

A row of mechanical metal palm trees dotting the area in front of Space Mountain



The Thirst Rangers' distinctive red-and-white cargo rocket ship is actually reformed from the ship in the 1986 Disney live action film "The Navigator".

are Power Palms planted near the Tomorrowland Light and Power Company. When their metallic fronds are extended, they capture solar energy that they store in the coconut-like globes high on the trunk. As they collect this energy, the globes glow providing lighting in the area at night.

One Power Palm is purposely stuck in a half-way position with its globes missing because they were supposedly harvested to remove the energy and will soon be emptied and then replaced to gather even more solar power.

With its renovation, Space Mountain got its first official future name: Starport Seven-Five, a reference to the official January 1975 opening date of the attraction at Walt Disney World.

Cosmic Ray's Starlight Café is a popular chain of intergalactic franchise throughout the universe. "This is the FIRST Earth Restaurant Franchise from Outer Space" proclaimed the original poster for this food and beverage location.

Guests dining in the Starlight Lounge can enjoy the song stylings and snappy banter of audio-animatronics performer Sonny Eclipse during his approximately 20 minute performance.

This Audio-Animatronics figure was actually modified from a similar figure, Officer Zzzzyxx, who was at the baggage screening desk outside of the Star Tours

attraction at Tokyo Disneyland.

Direct from Yew Nork on the planet Zork, Sonny Eclipse is the "Biggest Little Star in the Galaxy." The Bossa Supernova and Eclipso musical stylings of Sonny and his Astro Organ, along with his ethereal and invisible backup singers, The Space Angels, have entertained guests for almost two decades.

Besides featuring some of the most popular attractions, Walt Disney World's Tomorrowland also has some of the most inventive, clever and consistent storytelling at the Magic Kingdom for perceptive theme park guests to enjoy.



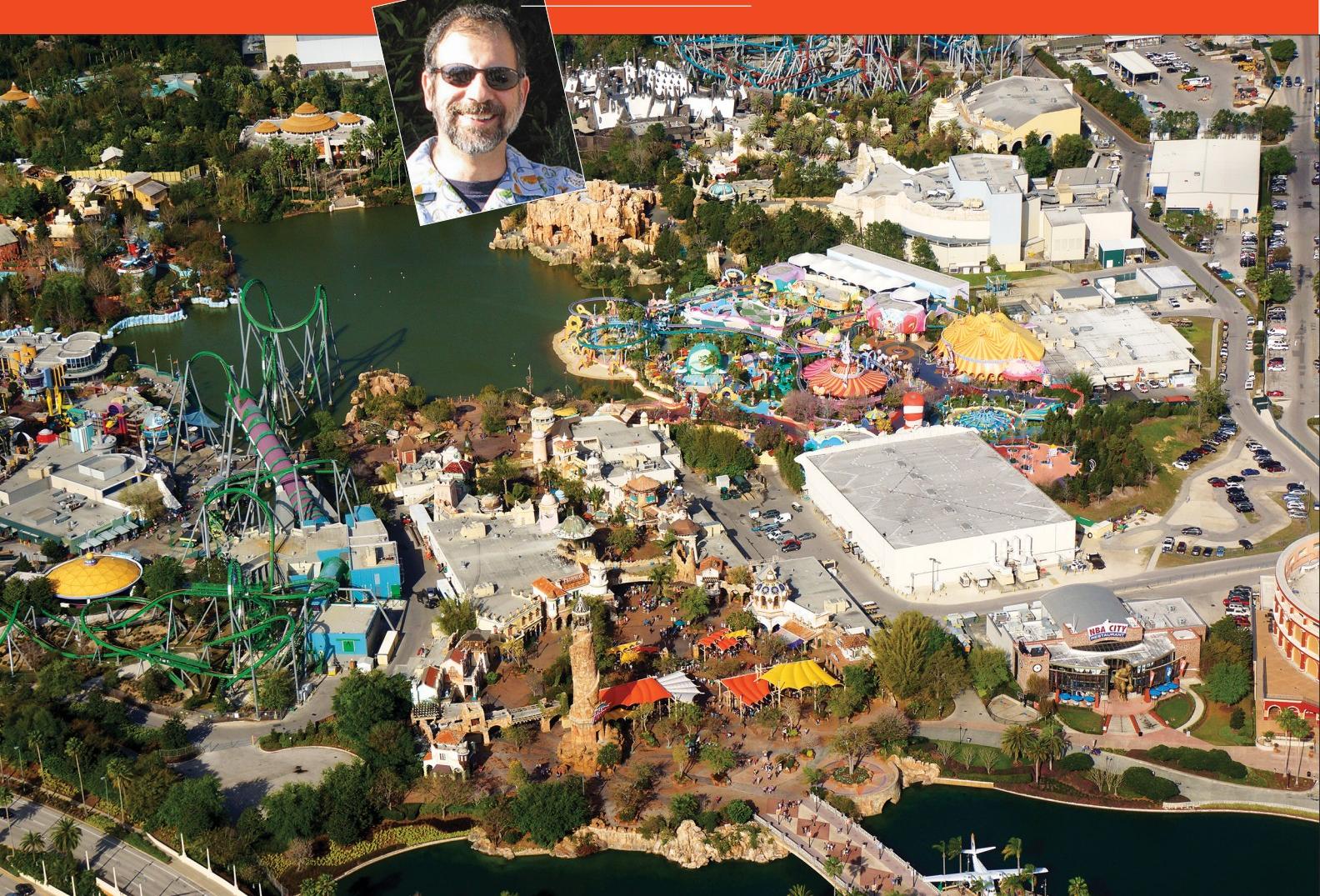
These Power Palms are said to capture solar energy to run the city, but one of them has already had its globes harvested.

Excerpt from

Universal vs. Disney

The creation of Universal's Islands of Adventure

By Sam Gennawey



Editor's Note: The following is an excerpt from the new book "Universal VS. Disney" by Author Sam Gennawey. His unique point of view built on his passion for history, his professional training as an urban planner, and his obsession with theme parks has brought speaking invitations from Walt Disney Imagineering, the Walt Disney Family Museum, Disney Creative and many Disneyana clubs and podcasts. He is a senior associate at the planning firm of Katherine Padilla and Associates, and he lives in Pasadena, Calif.

His "Unofficial Guide to American theme parks' greatest rivalry" takes the reader from the creation of Universal Studios as a theme park, to the opening of The Wizarding World of Harry Potter: Diagon Alley, and Disney and Universal's race to be the first to open a "studios" park in Central Florida. We've selected just a portion of the chapter on the creation of Universal's Islands of Adventure for you: the creation of the park as a whole and a section on the Jurassic Park area.

Chapter 10: Uniquely Different

Rising from the ashes of Cartoon World [original idea for Universal Orlando's second park] was Universal's Islands of Adventure. Starting in 1994, a new vision was starting to emerge. "Ron [Bension, MCA President] was the stimulus behind Islands of Adventure," said Barry Upson [executive vice president of Universal Creative]. "He actually did a really rough little diagram on the back of an envelope. Literally did it while on an airplane. The fundamental notion of the islands environment was his." He added, "We stuck with the basic idea, and it matured very nicely. It was a park compatible with Universal Studios Florida but uniquely different."

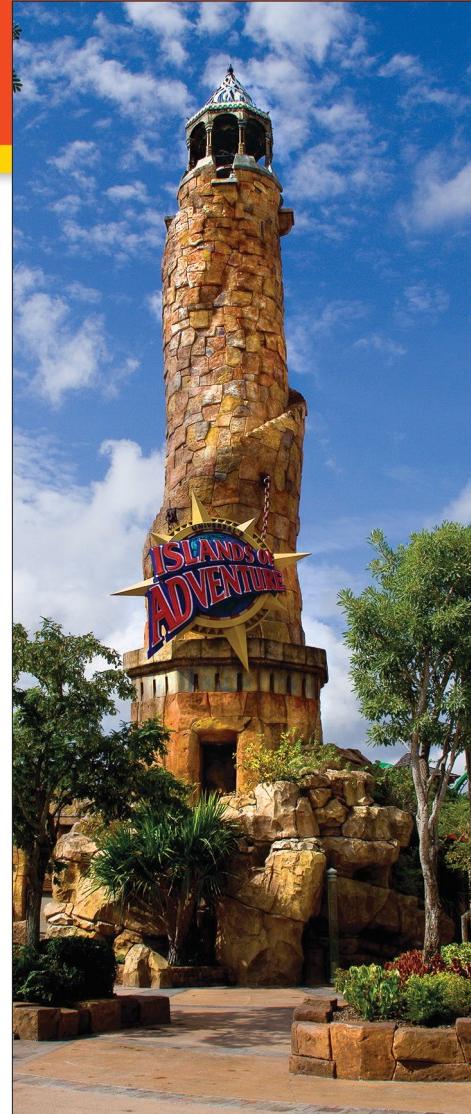
Once again, finding the right mix of intellectual properties to license would be critical to the park's success. After the negotiations for the Warner Bros. characters failed, Phil Hettema [senior vice president of attraction development] asked, "Well, we think we still have Seuss, really what else do we have?" Making Jurassic Park the centerpiece to the new park allowed the design team to rethink the entire concept. They already had the rights for the Dr. Seuss characters from Dr. Seuss Enterprises L.P. for

Cartoon World. Replacing the DC Comics heroes was the stable of characters from the New York-based Marvel Comics. Marvel was struggling at the time, and Hettema said they were "very obtainable." The agreement between Universal and Marvel was restricted to east of the Mississippi River. They also had permission from Jay Ward and King Features, a division of the Hearst Corporation of New York.

On May 6, 1997, the press learned new details about Universal's Islands of Adventure. The \$1 billion, 110-acre park would benefit by the participation of Steven Spielberg as creative consultant. In addition to Jurassic Park, Seuss Landing, Marvel Super Hero Island, and Toon Lagoon would be the Port of Entry and The Lost Continent. The two new islands represented adventure, exploration, trading, myths, and legends.



In Seuss Landing, guests hear 14 different song vignettes as they walk through the land.



This lighthouse is your beacon to adventure.



Marvel Super Hero Island was originally supposed to be themed to DC Comic characters.



A look down the street in the Toon Lagoon area of Islands of Adventure. The original idea for Universal's second park was for it to be called Cartoon World.

Each of the six large "islands" would become complete immersive environments containing attractions, restaurants, and merchandise shops. The park would be part of a \$2.6 billion expansion that would also include hotels, shopping, dining, and entertainment. Universal would finally compete

head to head against Disney. "Now we were going to rob from Disney's market and do it in our own way with a much more team-focused mix and balance."

The Hollywood property benefited by being part of an active movie studio. Universal Studios Florida started as a working studio, but it became a chance to let the visitor enjoy a stroll through a production studio back lot and get to "ride the movies." Islands of Adventure would focus on the themes of adventure based in books, cartoons, and literature. The material ranged from Greek classics to Dr. Seuss to the Sunday funnies.

Islands of Adventure opened with 11 rides, 15 restaurants, and an additional 20–25 food carts. The construction process was not without its problems. Universal gained a reputation for sending thousands of change orders to the construction companies, and some of them pushed back with lawsuits.

Despite these issues, Islands of Adventure opened on May 28, 1999. Learning from the grand opening of Universal Studios Florida, every precaution was taken to make sure that everything worked. This was not going to be a repeat of 1990. Cathy Nichols, CEO of the Universal Studios Recreation Group noted, "A lot of key players were involved. That helps us to

avoid it ever occurring again." Mark Woodbury [Universal Creative] said, "A lot of it lies in making sure the technology works. We've tackled the tough stuff early in the process." Lisa Girolami, producer for Seuss Landing joked, "The only surprises that will be here are the ones we create."

Of the original 11 rides, 4 were roller coasters. These were the first new coasters since Boardwalk and Baseball closed Central Florida's only wooden coaster in 1990. Mark Woodbury suggested that Islands of Adventure is "for people who like to be scared. That like to be on the edge. That like to push themselves. We give them that opportunity."

More than either of the existing Universal parks, the landscape design approached Disney levels of attention. The six highly themed lands were all designed with different plant and hardscape palettes. Port of Entry was designed to resemble the worn, interesting back streets found in the oldest port cities of the world. Seuss Landing used intense colors in paving and unusual formed/textured trees to reinforce the famous Seuss stories. Lost Continent used rockwork, evergreen oaks, and palms to re-create the Mediterranean images in the minds of visitors. Jurassic Park used abundant tropical plantings and simulated dirt for the paving. Toon Lagoon featured



Just as in the original film, guests pass under this arch to enter. Originally there were two arches, one on each side of the area, but one was recently taken down for new construction.

cartoon rocks and wood while allowing the landscape planting to fall into the background. Marvel Super Hero used trees clipped in tight forms, stainless steel rail systems, and terrazzo pavement to simulate the desired comic book imagery.

A Direct Line To Our Emotions

Another innovation that made Islands of Adventure stand out from the competition was the park's sound design. John Rust was hired in 1996 to produce a custom soundtrack for the park. He said, "Music is a direct line to our emotions — I can control the kind of emotion I want you to feel by the kind of music I play. We go to the effort of theming every other part of a theme park. We need to theme the music, too." He said for Islands of Adventure, "What we do is create immersion experiences. Music is a tremendous part of that."

Instead of relying on existing music, Rust set out to create an entirely new soundtrack for the park. "Usually, music is the last thing everyone thinks of instead of the first," Rust said. "Music is usually badly underfunded." That would not be the case for Islands of Adventure.

The background music for the Lost Continent is an exotic, multicultural blend written primarily by William Kidd, a protégé of composer John Williams. Kidd also wrote the soundtracks for Return to Lonesome Dove and the theme song for

the "Lois and Clark" television series. The Lost Continent and Port of Entry music was recorded in December 1997 at venues ranging from a state-of-the-art soundstage to a former monastery.

The other lands were recorded in December 1998. Chip Smith and Tony Humecke were responsible for the soundtrack for Seuss Landing and Toon Lagoon. The park used the iconic score by John Williams for Jurassic Park. Howard Drossin penned the music for Marvel Super Hero Island.

The park-wide music effort was considered the most ambitious yet in the industry. Islands of Adventure was the first theme park designed with a stereo soundtrack in mind. John Rust described the system. "There's a bed of music in each zone," he said. "Then, hidden in each zone are about 10 point-source speakers broadcasting specific effects — frogs croaking, a peacock call, people trading camels in Arabic. Any time there's a backstage wall, we put speakers behind it, implying there's another street down there." Just as a movie soundtrack changes



Jurassic Park River Adventure was slated for Universal Studios Florida in 1992, but built at Universal Studios Hollywood first.

as the plot progresses, the background music changes as visitors move through the islands. For example, in Seuss Landing the separate elements on separate tracks are tied to different characters along the path. From one end to the other, visitors experience 14 different song vignettes.

There were special challenges with the soundtrack for Seuss Landing. Composers Chip Smith and Tony Humecke had to work with an existing inventory of imaginary instruments created by Theodor Geisel (Dr. Seuss) and to interpret what sounds that they might make. They wanted a soundtrack that's "played with a certain attitude, a little off center, a little naughty," according to Humecke.

"We didn't know what an oom-pah or a boom-pah was, so we made one," said Chip Smith. Humecke said, "Part of the process is finding just the right kind of junk." While studying the books, they discovered that one group of Who musicians is "very serious and studious [while the other is] always just on the edge of chaos," according to Smith. "Anything that sounded too normal for Seuss land, we tweaked in digital land."



The Discovery Center acts like the "wienie" of the park, to draw guests around the lagoon.



Park guests used to be able to meet this large animatronic dinosaur in the Jurassic Park area. This attraction is now closed.

For the Lost Continent, William Kidd combined a Javanese gamelan orchestra with ancient instruments from several cultures, including metal and percussive instruments from the Middle East, India, and Greece. "We wanted the music to be as important as the art direction," according to Rust. "We wanted to come up with an authentic sound of Old Baghdad. But the real thing isn't very pleasant to our Western ears, so we created a romantic, 1940s feature-film version. It's filled with authentic instruments — finger cymbals, gongs, and all kinds of local musical instruments." Rust described Kidd's Celtic-Style soundtrack for the Merlin wood section as "happy, but on a bed of uneasiness. There's something foreboding in it. As you come in from Jurassic Park, there's a drum track done with ancient rack drums, which evoke the Celtic time."

Jurassic Park

Jurassic Park is the catalyst for the transformation of Cartoon World into Universal's Islands of Adventure. What story could be more perfect for a theme park than Jurassic Park? After all, the book was set in a fictional theme park on a beautiful remote tropical island called Isla Nublar, where a mastermind has brought back dinosaurs from extinction. Then

something goes horribly wrong. Perfect for a Universal theme park.

Jurassic Park was given the most prominent location at the back of the park. The full-scale replica of the Discovery Center across the lagoon is the first thing guests see once they leave the Port of Entry. The structure acts like a beckoning hand, drawing people around the lagoon. Once they get there, they see a building that looks just like the one destroyed in the film. "We are the oasis," said show producer Bob Shreve. "By the time guests get to us, we figure they've done half the park, they're tired, they're hungry, and they

need to refuel. It's subdued and comfortable — but we don't want you to get too relaxed." He added, "This is a place where we can mix relaxation and thrills in one easy, greasy motion."

Inside of the Discovery Center is a two-story rotunda with two life-size dinosaur skeletons fighting it out. On the entrance level are the Burger Digs and the Dino Store. On the lower level are numerous interactive exhibits, such as a hatchery where visitors can analyze dinosaur eggs and witness a live birth. Younger guests have the chance to name the new dinosaur. Other activities include a quiz show called You Bet Jurassic and lenses that simulate the eyes of a dinosaur. For many guests, the greatest feature may be a roomy air-conditioned space. On the other side of the Discovery Center is a beautiful plaza along the lagoon with incredible views of the park. Even on the busiest days, the space remains mostly vacant. Phil Hettema said, "I think we made a mistake in not putting more programming out there even if it was a dining program."

At 21 acres, Jurassic Park is the largest of the five islands. The art direction was based on Jurassic Park (1993) and Jurassic Park: The Lost World (1997). Shreve said, "I identified what the story was at each individual attraction to make for a cohesive guest experience, ensured that the design and engineering processes supported what we needed, and oversaw the installation to



Guests can play interactive games and see a dinosaur egg hatch in the lower level of the Jurassic Park Discovery Center.

get the quality and value we were supposed to." He said, "This whole place was basically a swamp when we got here. We brought in and planted every stick." It took more than 4,000 newly planted trees and 65,000 shrubs and bushes to create the lush jungle. In the evening, this is the only island to be bathed entirely in its own stylized theatrical wash, a moonlight blue.

Just beyond the Discovery Center is Camp Jurassic. Dale Mason was responsible for the design of the children's interactive play area. At the center is a smoldering caldera. Hettema said, "The geotechnical backbone to the entire island is centered on the caldera at the middle of Camp Jurassic. The ground twists around the caldera, and this twisting extends all the way out to the drop of the raft ride. The evidence is different shifts of rock." Children can view the caldera and romp through the caves and quarries of a lava pit and amber mine. Sound gags are everywhere, including dinosaur footprints that trigger dinosaur growls embedded in thematically paved paths.

Circling above Camp Jurassic is the Pteranodon Flyers. The child-friendly ride is meant to be a gentle introduction to the world of roller coasters. Two riders sit under a Pteranodon with a 10-foot wingspan and go on a slow, circular path 60 feet above the play area. Because the "birds" can only seat two guests, and only three "birds" can be on the track at the same

time, the ride's capacity is extremely limited. So Universal placed a height limit of 56 inches and one adult. At one point, Bob Shreve said, "Universal is considering ways to cut down on what is certain to be a long wait. It may mean a complete redesign of the vehicles to increase their capacity." The redesign never happened.

Overall, the Florida Jurassic Park River Adventure is similar to the version in Hollywood. The 85-foot plunge at a 55-degree angle is the longest drop for a water ride in Central Florida. Journey to Atlantis at SeaWorld is 60 feet, while Splash Mountain at the Magic Kingdom is only 52 feet.

Set within a lush, tropical environment was another cutting-edge attraction. The Triceratops Encounter was a walk-through attraction that led to a paddock holding an audio-animatronic adult triceratops. Universal hired Toronto-based Spar Aerospace to build the robots. The firm had built the robotic cargo arms for NASA's space shuttles and the dinosaurs in Hollywood. The 23-foot-long and 10-foot-tall audio-animatronic interactive characters had 34 articulated joints animating their heads, tails, and musculature.

Actors portrayed veterinary assistants and tested the beasts for signs of a cold. The dinosaur breathed deeply, blinked, grunted, flinched, sneezed, and even urinated. Universal took care to add a dinosaur "scent" for added believability. They were painted reddish brown for a



The overhead Pteranodon Flyers attraction is said to add "kinetic energy" to the 21-acre Jurassic Park area.

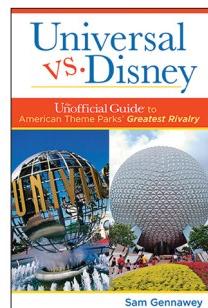
"classically reptilian look," according to Shreve. There were three holding paddocks, and the dinosaurs were named Cera, Topper and Chris.

Upon reflection, Phil Hettema was disappointed with the attraction. "In spite of much effort, it never really sparked with people," he said. "I couldn't tell you to this day if it was a fault of the figure. It wasn't dynamic enough or flexible enough in its programming? Or it just didn't appeal to people. I still understand the appeal of dinosaurs. If we had been able to give kids a chance to get up close and personal with the dinosaur and they felt like they were doing that, it should have been a slam-dunk." He also suggested it was difficult to maintain [The attraction is now closed].



The 85-foot drop at a 55-degree angle for the Jurassic Park River Adventure is the longest for a water ride in Central Florida.

To read the full story of the creation of Universal Orlando and Disney's Hollywood Studios and more, you can purchase "Universal Vs. Disney" by Sam Gennawey on Amazon.com and at all major book stores. It is published by Keen Communications. Gennawey is also the author of the newly released history of Walt Disney's first ever destination attraction, "The Disneyland Story" and "Walt Disney and the Promise of Progress City".



You Can't Escape The Rise Of The Escape Room!

They're popping up all around the world, but what are they?

By Andy Haynes

Locked boxes such as the one on the left are common in nearly every escape room game. Right, You'll need a solid team if you want to successfully escape in time!



An actor at It's A Trap, left, gives some final instructions to a group of participants.

Picture this: you and a few of your closest friends are trapped in a room with a timer counting down. If you want to escape in time, you'll have to search the room for clues and solve a series of puzzles. Succeed and you'll be rewarded with your freedom. Fail and you're trapped forever. Well, not quite.

This is actually the foundation for Central Florida's newest attraction craze known as "escape rooms." If you're thinking it sounds a bit like a video game, you're not that far off. The real life "escape rooms" can trace their lineage back to "escape the room" video games. Players in these games would point and click around an environment searching for clues and keys in order to solve puzzles and open locks allowing them to escape. Some enterprising individuals translated the idea to the real world and since then, "escape rooms" have been popping up all over the world. The tension of the countdown timer and the lateral thinking-style puzzles that define the genre have a wide appeal and have helped drive the niche experience into a global phenomenon. Three such attractions have opened in the Orlando area in the past year alone, with another two planned to open shortly. While the basic premise of "solving puzzles to escape a room in a certain time limit" remains the same across the different businesses, the specifics differ greatly and lead to very different experiences at each attraction.

The Great Escape Room

The first such attraction to open in the Orlando area was The Great Escape Room. Located downtown, it features two different puzzles, "The Library" and "The Game Room," with plans to add several new, different rooms soon. "Our attraction is unique," said Scott Sakowitz, one of The Great Escape Room's operators, "because we truly allow you to tear the room apart in searching for a large number of well hidden clues." The Great Escape Room is also unique for its rather high level of difficulty compared to the other rooms in town. "About 20 percent of groups are able to escape," explained Sakowitz before adding, "but every group has fun!" (Check out the July 17, 2014 episode of "Orlando Attractions Magazine - The Show" to see video of

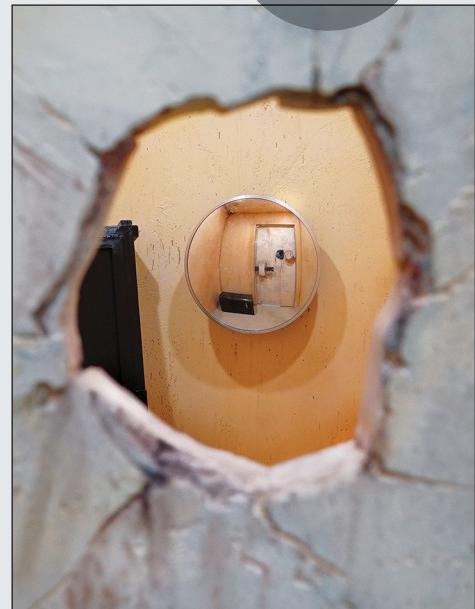


Unique elements such as puppets, costumed actors, lights and sound add to the immersion of It's A Trap.

how the Attractions crew fared when they attempted The Great Escape Room.)

It's A Trap!

Heading out a little farther from Orlando, in Winter Park, you can find the next escape room called It's A Trap! The brainchild of husband and wife team Debra and Alex Beardsley, It's A Trap takes the escape room concept and gives it a geek makeover. They currently offer two rooms: one with a science fiction theme and the other with a fantasy theme, each of which have two different games, with plans to change out the science fiction theme for a superhero one. It's A Trap is also notable for its high level of immersion. "What makes us different," said Toni Bonaccorso, the attraction's marketing manager, "is our focus on immersion and the story being told." Instead of an attendant facilitating the game, your team is given a professional actor who helps guide the story and provide additional entertainment and clues. Every puzzle and clue in It's a Trap relates directly to the story being told,

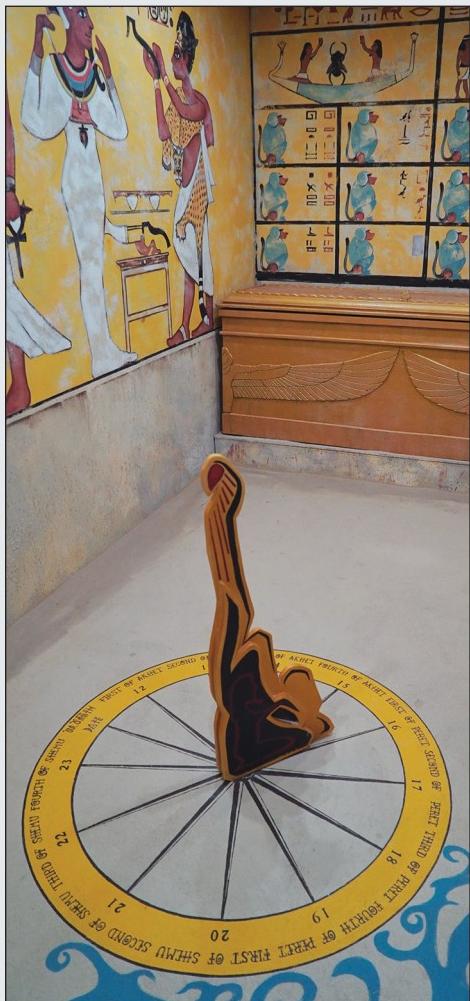


Sometimes you'll need to look at a puzzle from a whole new perspective to solve it.

leaving little to no break in the reality of the experience. Another unique feature that the story-first approach allows is for each room to have three different endings depending on how far your team progresses before time expires.



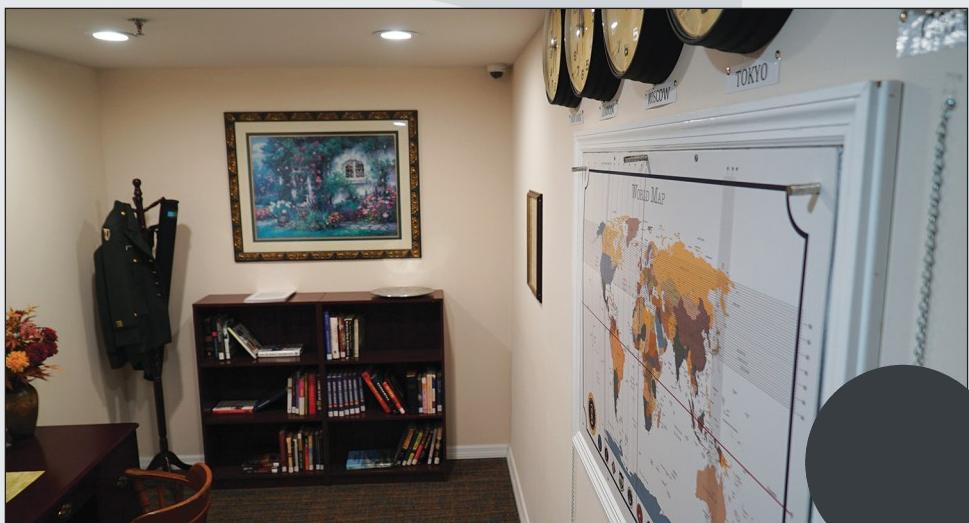
Impressive props, like this one from America's Escape Game, can contain elaborate puzzles.



The rooms in America's Escape Game feature unique themes with extensive scenic design.

Escapology

Back a little closer to the attractions on International Drive is Escapology, located right around the corner from SeaWorld. Escapology features a number of very polished and slick games with high production values. Prior to attempting the room, your team is shown a short pre-show video describing the situation you're about to find yourself in and the general theming of the room. The décor is quite posh but the



Clues can be hidden anywhere and everything you see in a room could be part of a challenge.

staff keeps everything friendly and down to Earth. "We pride ourselves on creating a comfortable yet sophisticated atmosphere," said Kimberly Shepherd, Escapology's marketing director. Each of Escapology's rooms are loosely themed on actual historic events such as being shanghaied on a Chinese ship or embroiled in the middle of the Cuban Missile Crisis. (To see the Attractions Magazine crew attempt Escapology, check out the January 8, 2015 episode of *The Show*.)

Those are the escape rooms currently open in the area, but coming soon to International Drive are two more such attractions:

The Escape Game Orlando

Isaac Larson, general manager of The Escape Game Orlando, seemed very confident about his company's ability to make its mark in the area, stating, "People are in Orlando to make memories. I'm looking forward to The Escape Game Orlando becoming the go-to place to make those memories." The Escape Room Orlando will be bringing two of its most popular themes from its Nashville location, The Heist and Classified, as well as creating two all-new ones.

America's Escape Game

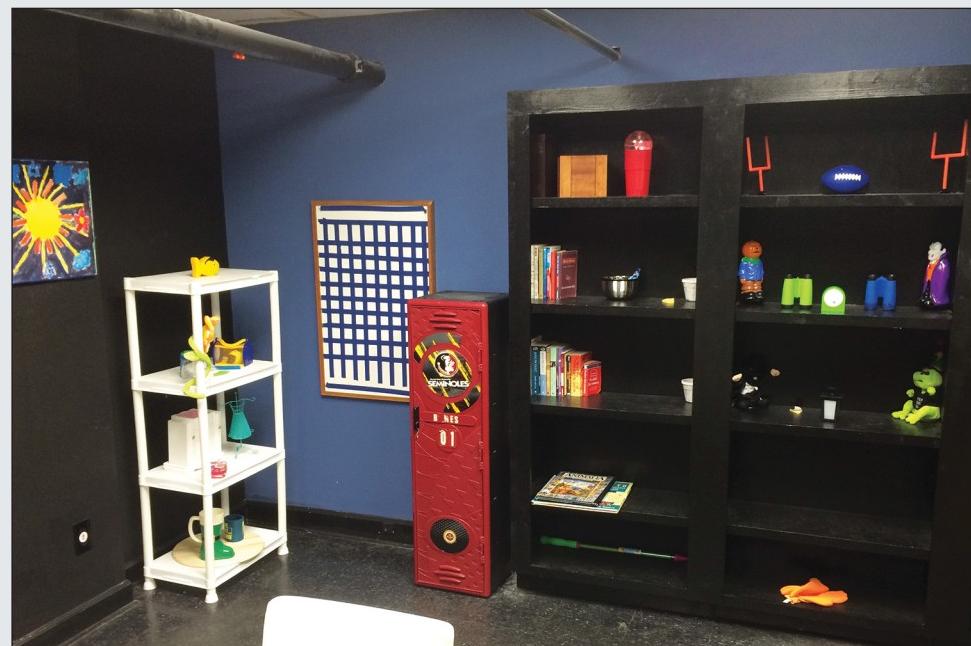
The other upcoming escape room, America's Escape Game, promises three different highly-themed rooms each with an impressive amount of production value. The rooms have all been designed and decorated by professional scenic artists and

will include lights and sound as well as other special effects to help immerse the players in the experience. Their high-tech approach to the games include complete video and audio monitoring systems and a screen in each room through which their game operators, known as Escape Artists, will be able to help teams along with clues when needed. And according to Alex Reece, one of the partners responsible for America's Escape Game, they have a high likelihood of being needed. "We expect [America's Escape Game] to be one of the more difficult experiences in town," he said. "While most other games have around 15 challenges required to complete them, ours will have closer to 25!"

General Tips and Tricks

Giving any of these attractions a try can be a daunting task. While the specifics of each individual escape room is different, there are several universal strategies which can help ensure that you make it out in time.

First, remember to look absolutely everywhere for clues. Look in, on, behind, under and over everything. Don't just open a drawer and look inside, but pull the drawer out and look all over it. Nowhere is too obvious or too obscure for a clue to be hidden. They can be hidden in the last place you'd ever look or right under your nose. Second, don't be afraid to communicate with your team.



This neatly organized and carefully prepared room from The Great Escape Room is just begging to be torn apart and searched thoroughly.

Let them know where you've searched and pay attention to what they've searched. Likewise, if you're stuck on a puzzle, ask your group for help. Another set of eyes may spot something you've missed. Having the maximum amount of people for each room definitely helps. If you're playing with strangers, don't be afraid to communicate with them. Third, stay organized. It can be easy to lose

yourself in the chaos, so designate a location in the room to collect any clues you come across. Not having to re-search already checked locations can save you precious time later.

Finally, remember to just relax and have fun. If you start to find yourself getting too anxious about the countdown, just take a deep breath and remind yourself: it's only a game.

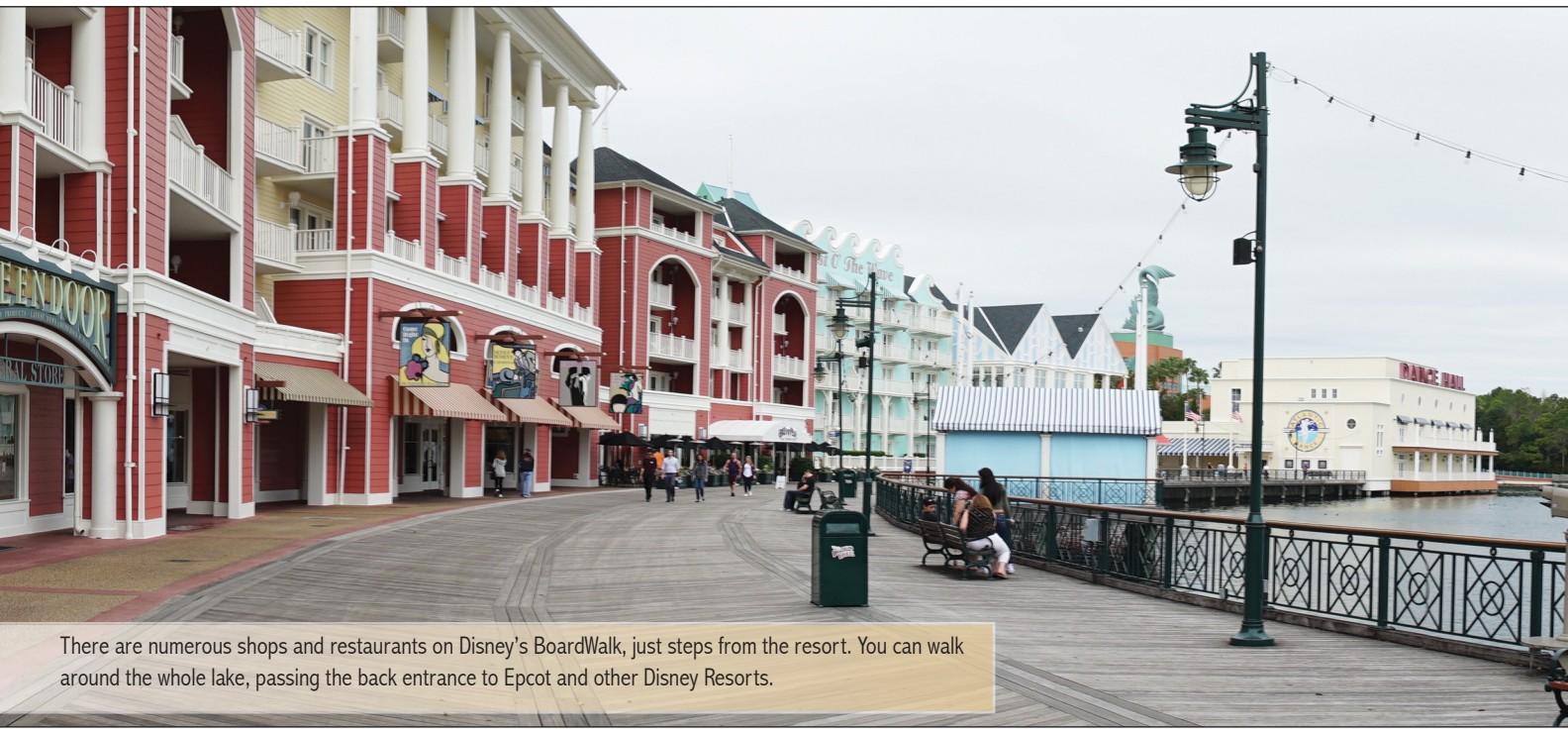
Name	Price Per Person	Hours of Operation	Number of Current Games	Players Per Room	Website
The Great Escape Room	\$23 - \$28	Weekdays: 6 - 10 p.m. Weekends: 12 - 10 p.m.	2	2 - 14	TheGreatEscapeRoom.com
It's A Trap	\$20 - \$23	Friday - Monday	4	2 - 8	ItsATrapGame.com
Escapology	\$25 - \$30	Weekdays: 1 - 10 p.m. Weekends: 10 a.m. - 10 p.m.	3	2 - 5	Escapology.com
The Escape Game Orlando	\$28	Sun - Fri: 8 a.m. - 10 p.m. Saturday: 7:15 a.m. - Midnight	4	2 - 12	OrlandoEscapeGame.com
America's Escape Game	\$35	Wed & Thur: 11 a.m. - 9 p.m. Fri & Sat: 11 a.m. - Midnight Sunday: 11 a.m. - 7 p.m.	3	2 - 10	AmericasEscapeGame.com



DISNEY'S BOARDWALK INN

Classic Style with Modern Luxury

Disney's BoardWalk Inn is one of the three deluxe resorts on Disney's BoardWalk, located between Hollywood Studios and Epcot. The resort's theme is that of a northeast seacoast hotel set sometime in the early twentieth century. It serves to complement the BoardWalk itself, which is styled after the famous boardwalk in Atlantic City. The BoardWalk Inn is a popular destination with a convenient location and deluxe amenities — with a deluxe price tag attached. But there is still plenty to enjoy about the resort, which recently completed a total rehab of each of its 372 rooms. Currently, renovation is underway on the 681 rooms which make up the BoardWalk Villa side of the resort available to Disney Vacation Club members, and all guests when available.



There are numerous shops and restaurants on Disney's BoardWalk, just steps from the resort. You can walk around the whole lake, passing the back entrance to Epcot and other Disney Resorts.



The first thing that will catch your eye about the resort is the elegant and elaborate theming. Bright hand-painted murals entice you toward the BoardWalk itself, calling it the "showplace of the shore," and upon entering the lobby you can immediately see a few of the authentic artifacts, which are spread throughout the hotel. In fact, the resort features a complimentary guided tour of the grounds and its artifacts every Wednesday through Saturday at 9 a.m. Called the Ballyhoo Tour, this experience is led by a knowledgeable and friendly cast member and allows guests a unique opportunity to learn more about the historical relevance and story of the resort, its artifacts and its theming. Many of the hotel's amenities actually sport names taken directly from the era after which it was inspired. Dundy's

Sundries, the gift shop, is named after Elmer Dundy, one of the men who helped create Luna Park, which is itself, the inspiration for Luna Park Pool, one of the three pools on the property. Several locations also have names which, while not directly taken from actual people or places from the era, are certainly intended as homages. Muscles and Bustles Health Club, the onsite workout room promises to help promote "Vim, Vigor and Vitality," and the humorously named Ferris W. Eahlers Community Hall are just a few examples.

In contrast to the throwback theming, BoardWalk Inn actually features many modern and welcome amenities. Beyond valet parking, there is no charge for parking and no hidden resort fees. If you booked ahead of time, which is recommended throughout the



Some of the rooms offer an excellent view of the nightly Epcot fireworks.



This entrance leads to the Inn and the Boardwalk itself.



Friendly cast members welcome you with a smile.



Resort Report



The Luna Park Pool, with its signature Keister Coaster slide and carousel shaped bar, is fun for the whole family.

year, and you've received your MagicBands in the mail, you can get direct-to-room booking and never have to stop at the front desk to check in (this is also being rolled out to all Disney World resorts). Otherwise, you may be greeted by a curbside cast member armed with a tablet who can immediately assist you or guide you toward the front desk to complete your check-in.

The rooms themselves are quite spacious, from the standard rooms all the way up to the two-story Garden Suites and beyond to the Steeplechase Presidential Suite. Standard in every room is a TV, safe and refrigerator, among other



The scenic design and props scattered around the resort were carefully selected to immerse guests in the look and feel of the early twentieth century.



The Garden Suites offer private entrances and patios with carefully manicured landscaping.

Disney's BoardWalk Inn

comforts. Additional appliances such as DVD players and microwave ovens can be ordered from the front desk at no charge. Club level accommodations, known as the Innkeepers Club, are also available. They feature concierge cast members who are able to arrange dining, recreation, transportation and many other services, as well as access to the private Innkeepers lounge where you may enjoy complimentary beverages and food throughout the day.

As far as restaurants go, the hotel itself does not contain any, but it does allow immediate access to the BoardWalk itself, which features numerous restaurants such as Trattoria Al Forna (featured on page 52), Flying Fish Cafe, and Big River Grille and Brewing Works. The resort does offer an onsite bar called the Belle Vue Lounge, which features a continental breakfast in the morning and full bar service at night. There is also the Leaping Horse Libations, a bar and snack shack located adjacent to the Luna Park Pool, open daily.

Moving on to recreation, there is plenty to do in and around the resort to keep your family busy without ever having to go to any of the theme parks. Each of the three pools across the property contain a hot tub and available sunbathing deck space. The signature pool (Luna Park Pool), while adjacent to both a playground and the aforementioned Leaping Horse Libations, is known for its 200-foot slide called the Keister Coaster, which is styled after an old time roller coaster and features a giant clown face mural.

Other daytime recreation options include full tennis courts, a croquet court, a marked running trail and the fully stocked Ferris W. Eahler Community Hall. From the hall, guests can play video games, board games, pool, ping pong, corn hole or other games for free. They can also rent DVDs, bicycles and participate in arts and crafts. There is also a daily schedule of organized family-friendly poolside activities which include trivia, bingo, hula-hoops, pool parties and a campfire where guests can roast marshmallows. There is even a nightly movie under the stars every day at BoardWalk's Village Green or at the nearby Yacht and Beach Club. When evening rolls around, there are still plenty of very convenient options for entertainment, including Atlantic Dance Hall and Jellyrolls night clubs.

As a Deluxe Resort, Disney's BoardWalk Inn does feature one of the highest prices on Disney property, but

Location: 2101 North Epcot Resorts Blvd., Orlando, FL 32830

Prices: \$381 to \$607 Standard View
\$498 to \$678 Water View
\$573 to \$886 Standard Club Level
\$719 to \$1,009 Deluxe Club Level
\$777 to \$1,087 Garden Room Club Level

Contact: DisneyWorld.com or 407-939-6200



its comforts and conveniences cannot be beat. With direct access to both Hollywood Studios and Epcot by footpath and boat, as well as immediate access to the picturesque

BoardWalk itself and the shopping and dining options it contains, BoardWalk Inn earns its place amongst the finest accommodations Walt Disney World has to offer.



The grand lobby of the BoardWalk Inn is bright and inviting. It sets the tone for the rest of your stay.

Table Service



The Boardwalk style of the Trattoria entrance now fits in much better with the whole resort theming and captures the classic look of the typical New Jersey and New York boardwalks.



Susan and Simon Veness

Disney's New Trattoria

Serves Up Comfort, Italian Style

There's a new kid on the block, an immigrant from the East Coast with a decidedly Italian accent. Trattoria al Forno opened on Disney's BoardWalk in December, featuring fare named 'the most popular cuisine in the world' in 2013.

As with all things Disney, theme is everything. Area manager Vinnie Tai took us on a tour of the restaurant and described the Imagineering behind it. "The theme is like an old Boardwalk boarding house that has been converted into a restaurant. Hence, it has different areas, all with signs of the previous family's own-

ership. The Entrada is the foyer, with a brick arch showing the original entrance to the boarding house, plus a big wine display and period photos. The next room is the cucina, or dining kitchen. Here you can see the flooring style change and we make a big feature of the open kitchen with its Neapolitan-style pizza oven.

"Next is the formal dining room, displaying fine china and silver, which the family has handed down through the generations. The décor changes with nice carpeting, two wonderful chandeliers, and different furniture. The

Walt Disney Imgeering team collected all the antique silver and china to make it all look part of the original boarding house.

"The next room is the living quarters, with different furniture again and booth seating against the walls, which is very popular with families. Finally, we have our private room, which was originally the tavern of the boarding house, indicated by the liquor bottles along one wall and other small décor touches."

Small details were not overlooked. The boardwalks of New Jersey and Long Island are on the ocean, which

causes oxidization on the mirrors from the salt air, and that process was reproduced to add authenticity. "In fact," Vinnie told us, "the first week we were open, the cleaning crews said 'Sorry, we can't get your mirrors clean!'"

Chef Christian Rumpler joined us and explained the Trattoria's concept. "Our cuisine style is what the market has come to know as Italian cuisine. It is an Americanized version from all the Italian immigrants that came to New York and turned their cuisine into a non-traditional version. We are not going to break new ground with Italian food. This



Outside, Trattoria al Forno features a wonderful open-air dining terrace that also echoes of the traditional boardwalk style.



The interior view is one of contrasts, changing from the open Cucina, through to the family dining room and then the living quarters.

Table Service



Two highlights of the menu are among the appetizers, which feature a luscious Thin-Sliced Italian Cured Meats platter, left, which is ideal for sharing, and the signature wood-fired oven pizzas, with wonderfully fresh meats, tomatoes and fresh-folded mozzarella.



is about old favorites but, at the same time, we don't want to overcomplicate the situation. Our vision is that if we take a few great ingredients, it will be better than trying to create something nobody has seen before.

"Our tagliatelle carbonara is a good example. It is fresh pasta and a nice sauce, with fresh guanciale, which is pork cheek. That's all it needs if the execution is right and it's sea-

sioned properly. It is going to be a home run every time. Our concept is simplistic: back to basics with fresh ingredients. We haven't had a hard time with our menu because our guests really know and enjoy these things. Italy doesn't necessarily have chicken parmesana, but a boardwalk restaurant from New Jersey does!"

Chef Rumpler started his Disney career 20 years ago in the Disney college program,

opened the Golden Oak community's Summerhouse, and is a former chef from the California Grill and Mama Melrose's in the Studios park, and Tony's Town Square in Magic Kingdom. We asked what appealed to him about the Italian style of cooking.

"The great thing about Italian cuisine is that it is flexible. You might want cavatelli with a particular dish one day, and then a different pasta next

time, and we can do that here. We want our guests to visit this restaurant over and over again, so the menu won't ever get boring."

Along with glasses of sparkling Prosecco from Veneto in Northeast Italy to whet our appetites, we began with the Antipasti, sampling a beautifully tender Fried Calamari in non-traditional white balsamic agrodolce sauce, delicately sweet-and-sour from a combination of balsamic vinegar and golden raisins; then moved on to the Thin-Sliced Italian Cured Meats with a sensational peppery salami and a deliciously salty Napoli-style sopressata redolent of pepper, nutmeg, and mace and served with eggplant caponata, olives, and local pickles; and finally the Smoked Prosciutto, Potato, Rosemary and Mozzarella Pizza Al Forno A Legna, notable for its wonderfully gooey cheese and crisp crust. Fresh focaccia comes with each meal, including olive oil fine



The décor is accented by some clever touches all sourced by Disney Imagineers, including period-style family portraits, photos and other collectible knick-knacks sprinkled along the walls.



The dessert choice features a succulent array of Italian treats, like the Cannoli, Bomboloni, Hazlenut-Chocolate Cake and Tiramisu.

enough for dipping without any extra additives.

For entrees, we and our guest chose falling-off-the-bone Slow-cooked Lamb Shank in a rich reduction and served with creamy Polenta; the daily fish offering of succulent Snapper, roasted whole for extra flavor; and the Polpetta Gigante, a giant pork-and-beef meatball stuffed with spinach, garlic and onions, finished with bacon renderings and rice flour bread-crums, served over cheese-filled manicotti. It's a serious taste sensation that left no doubt that Trattoria al Forno was a far cry from the standard "Americanized Italian".

Dessert featured a sampling of classic tiramisu, with the lady fingers soaked in espresso and simple syrup for an extra-rich flavor; Piedmont Hazelnut-Chocolate Cake with golden candied hazelnuts; bomboloni — little doughnuts — typical New York Italian fare, served warm with chocolate sauce and

vanilla ice cream; and dainty Cannoli Pizzelle, with a light pistachio mascarpone-and-ricotta filling and chocolate cream.

"We were one of the first restaurants on property to really do a full gluten-free menu," Christian informed us, "and we are super-excited about the kid's menu and the breakfast menu." Meat and fish are obvious, but is there pasta on the gluten-free menu? You bet. There are four choices, plus a gluten-free seasonal risotto. Unique items on the breakfast menu, such as poached eggs over polenta, fresh-made apple crumb pancakes, and waffles with espresso-mascarpone cream sauce, ensures we will make a return trip as soon as possible.

Trattoria al Forno adds finesse and sophistication to New York Italian cuisine, with a depth of flavor that is distinctive and hugely enjoyable. If you think you've had Italian cooking – think again!



Trattoria al Forno

Location: Disney's BoardWalk

Price Range:

Appetizers: \$6.50 - \$16

Entrees: \$17 - \$37

Desserts: \$5 - \$7

Kid's Menu: \$8.59

Breakfast: \$7 - \$13.50

Contact: 407-939-3463

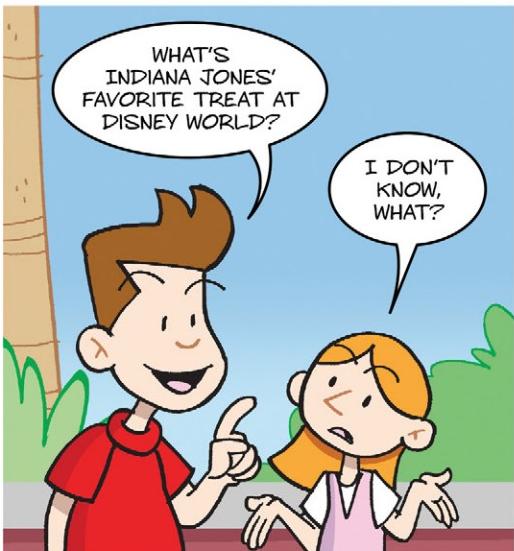
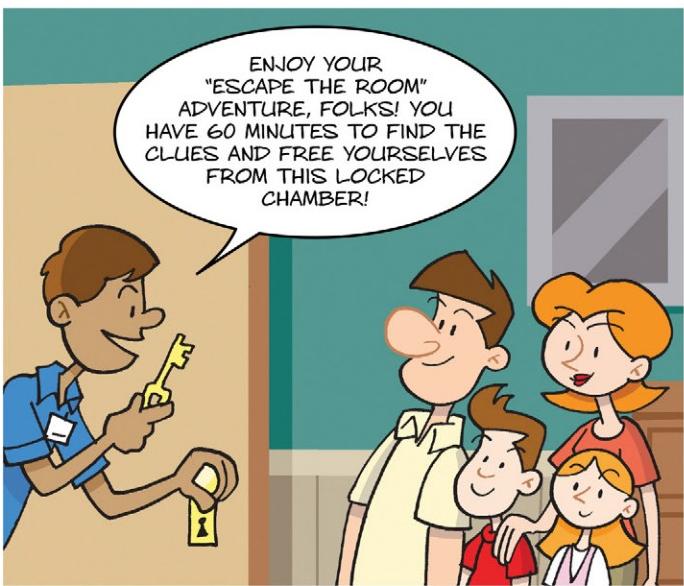
Online: disneyworld.com

Hours: 7:30 to 11 a.m. and 5 to 10 p.m.

Trattoria al Forno participates in the Disney Dining Plan and accepts Tables in Wonderland.

BEMUSEMENT PARK

by John Green
& Pat Lewis



SPOT tHe DIFFeReNcE

Fans pose for a photo while waiting for the opening presentation during "A Celebration of Harry Potter" at Universal Studios Florida.

Can you find 10 differences in the bottom photo?



1. The woman in front with blue hood is missing one of her badges. 2. The woman in front row wearing a yellow sash is missing one of her buttons. 3. An extra rail has been added near the woman in front with blue hood. 4. The white emblem on the man's jacket (right, wearing a baseball cap) has changed to a circular pin. 5. The woman's (front left) red shirt has changed to blue. 6. A palm tree is missing from right side of the man wearing a baseball cap (right). 7. The wand (top center) is shorter. 8. Woman in front row wearing a yellow sash is now wearing sunglasses. 9. The yellow brown banner (back left) has flipped the two colors. 10. The woman in front with a blue hood has added a lightning bolt to her forehead.



The Rumor Queue:

Volcano Bay, Innoventions,
Star Wars and roller coasters

By Fowl Owleron



Hello, Attractions readers! Welcome to another edition! It's spring and that means rain, but we're not going to let it get us down. Grab your umbrellas and join us as we take a walk through the latest theme park rumors.

Disclaimer: The thoughts expressed here are not purported as fact and should be viewed as hearsay until officially confirmed or denied by the companies mentioned.

Universal's Volcano Bay

A source has informed us that Universal's premiere water park will indeed be called "Volcano Bay." A new permit document was apparently leaked which revealed the code name "Project N," as well as the following details: 13 "resort amenities" that will range between 20 to 200 feet high and take up a total of 34 acres. The 200 feet max height might be a large volcano structure, which is rumored to be the focal point of this new water park.

Orange Harvest:

The Future of Star Wars at Disney

Disney's Star Wars expansion is com-

ing. I intend on expanding on this later, but here's the gist of the rumors: Disneyland will see the expansion replace Mickey's Toontown, while Hollywood Studios will lose Superstar Television Theater, ABC Sound Studio, Echo Lake and Min & Bill's Dockside Diner. The expansion is rumored to be in phases with the goal to have it completed before the final film in the new trilogy premieres in 2019.

Busch Gardens' Two Mystery Projects

Permits have recently been filed for an unannounced project in Busch Gardens' Egyptian section. Gwazi propelled its final train of guests on Feb. 1. The park's team hasn't announced either attraction ... Yet. We've heard the former will be a small footprint coaster while the other will be a larger, more intense coaster experience.

Innoventions West and Cranium Command

As a part of Disney's new initiative to reinvigorate Epcot, a slew of rumored attractions have made the rounds and we've two for you. A tip submitted informed us that Innoventions West will

be closing for good on April 30. We think it might be because the exhibit's sponsors have opted not to renew, but Disney hasn't commented on this speculation. Disney's Big Hero 6 is rumored to be the replacement with an assortment of interactive exhibits featuring Baymax, Hiro and the rest of the vibrant cast of characters.

Cranium Command closed in 2007 and the space has since been dormant, sans special events. This may be changing after the summer. We've heard rumors that Disney's pleased with the current state of Pixar's Inside Out, and the concept is being considered for a brand new attraction in the space Cranium Command once held.

Have a rumor, comment, or question? Send them our way at fowlowlerson@gmail.com.

You can also strike up a conversation with yours truly on Twitter @fowlowlerson.

Special thanks to @Stingray_travel, @Spencps2Eachus and @TheBGTBuzz on Twitter. Your tips helped shape this column and are greatly appreciated.

MYSTERY PHOTO

WIN A PRIZE!

Tell us what this is and which theme park and land you can see it in and you may win a prize! To enter, e-mail your answer, along with your name and mailing address to mystery@attractionsmagazine.com.

Hint: The answer to this close-up photo is mentioned elsewhere in this issue.



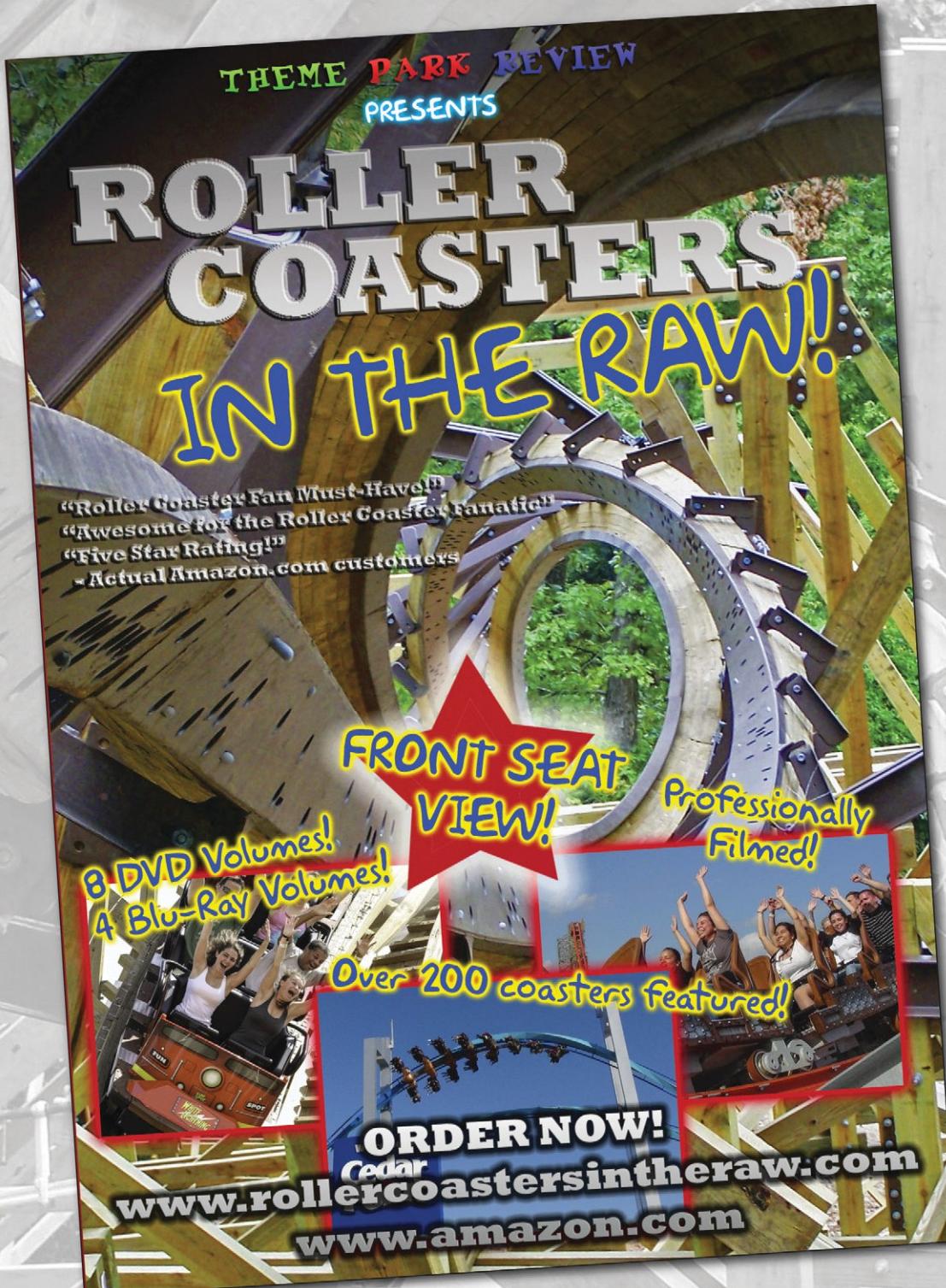
LAST ISSUE'S MYSTERY PHOTO ANSWER

Congratulations to Michael and Jackie Boudrot from Danvers, Mass. They recognized this as the alien from the Men In Black Alien Attack queue at Universal Studios Florida.



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By Andy Guinigundo

Attractions News from Outside the Orlando Area



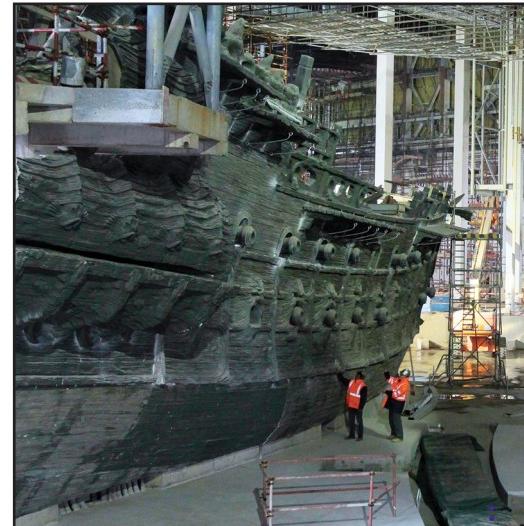
Disneyland Prepares for Its 60th Birthday

Disneyland Resort, Anaheim, Calif. — It's a few months away from Disneyland's 60th birthday on July 17. In January, Disney announced some of the diamond celebration shows. First, across the way in Disney California Adventure, World of Color, the spectacular nighttime light and fountain show will include a retelling of the Disneyland story by Mickey Mouse. Meanwhile, back in Disneyland, in the tradition of nighttime parades like the Main Street Electrical Parade, the "Paint the Night" parade will debut. It will be lit with 1.5 million individually controlled LED lights that will include characters from Disney classics, Pixar, and yes, even Frozen. These birthday celebration evenings will culminate in a new fireworks show "Disneyland Forever". More than just fireworks, the show will feature Disney's most ambitious digital mapping projection project yet: Main Street U.S.A., It's a Small World, Rivers of America and the Matterhorn will all serve as palates for storytelling. Two original new songs, including one written by Disney legend Richard

Sherman, will be part of this show. Finally, Sleeping Beauty Castle and Carthay Circle Theater will glisten in diamond sparkle. All will be revealed May 22.

Universal Hollywood Celebrating 50 Years of Movie Making

Universal Studios Hollywood, Universal City, Calif. — Universal Studios reaches a major milestone this year. The president of Universal Studios Hollywood stated, "For 50 years, Universal Studios Hollywood has given guests unprecedented access to the world's most alluring business by inviting them to peak behind the velvet curtain and become part of the exciting movie-making process." The marquee attraction at Universal Studios Hollywood has always been their Studio Tour. Starting this year, the tram will undergo a makeover, culminating in a brand new fleet of ultra-comfortable high-tech trams by 2016. This year, guests will be able to experience the new Fast and Furious-Supercharged finale to the tour. This 3D HD attraction will be housed in a new 65,000 square foot backlot building and will feature stars from the Fast and Furious movies. Also debuting will be the Nighttime Studio Tour. As the name implies, the famous tour will take to the backlot streets after the sun goes down. The night tour promises to be a whole new experience with over 20 sites lit for night viewing. As its cousin in Florida, Hollywood will get a Simpson's Springfield. Sites like Krusty Burger and Moe's Tavern will be present. Lest we forget, Hollywood's own Wizarding World of Harry Potter will debut in 2016.



Shanghai Disney Resort Takes Shape . . .

Shanghai Disney Resort, Shanghai, China — The first Disney resort on Mainland China begins to emerge from construction and according to Disney chairman and CEO Bob Iger, it is on time for its completion by the end of 2015 with a planned spring 2016 debut. The "mountain" feature (Matterhorn?) topped out last December and the Art Nouveau-styled Disneyland Hotel topped out in January. Several other structures around the resort have also topped out or are nearing completion, including the largest castle Disney has ever built. As previously announced, Shanghai Disneyland will include not just a Pirates of the Caribbean ride, but an entire Pirates-themed land. The new E-ticket Pirates of the Caribbean: Battle for the Sunken Treasure is beginning to take shape.

Hersheypark Announces . . . a First-of-Kind Coaster in the U.S.

Hersheypark, Hershey, Penn. — Hersheypark announced its lucky 13th coaster to open this season. The Laff Trakk will be the first indoor, spinning, glow-





coaster in the United States. The interior will harken back to the classic fun houses of yesteryear. Park General Manager Kevin Stumpf stated, "Fun houses are an American amusement park treasure and an important part of the historical fabric of Hersheypark." Of course, a spinning glowing coaster within a fun house is literally a new twist on the concept. The coaster will be designed and built by German company Maurer Söhne. The four-seat ride vehicles will have two seats in two rows, back-to-back. The cars have the ability to rotate 360 degrees. The spin during the ride is influenced by the riders' weight and where they sit. The coaster will reach a maximum speed of about 40 mph over 1,400 feet of track at a height of 50 feet. Some of the track features include airtime camelbacks, high banking turns and an Immelman (half loop with a twist). The \$14 million ride will open this summer.

Luigi's Flying Tires Closes

Disney California Adventure, Anaheim, Calif. —

Less than three years after the opening of Cars Land, the cornerstone of Disney California Adventure's \$1 billion refurbishment and expansion, Luigi's Flying

Tires attraction closed Feb. 16. The ride was inspired by the classic Disneyland park attraction, Flying Saucers, that closed in 1966 after five years of operation. No specific reason was given for the ride's closure, but there is speculation that the ride simply didn't "gain traction" with this generation of park goers. A new ride will open in the space in early 2016. Details are scant at this time but it will include a brand new ride system with new vehicles. The Casa della Tires building, certainly a memorable address in Radiator Springs, will remain.



Wars has been popular in the Lego parks as Minilands that began to appear in Legoland around the world in 2012. Star Wars Lego building sets have also been popular. The world's largest Lego model is comprised of 5.3 million bricks. It took over 17,000 hours to construct. It weighs in at 20 tons and is 42 feet long and 10 feet tall. The model debuts in the park on March 28 and can be seen throughout the season.



Life-size Lego X-Wing Fighter Returns Home

Legoland Billund Resort, Billund, Denmark —

The World's largest Lego model is a 1:1 scale X-Wing fighter like those flown in the Star Wars movies. It debuted to much fanfare in Times Square in New York City in 2013. It has since made the rounds, recently appearing during Star Wars Days at Legoland California last year. In 2015, the model will make its way to the birthplace of the Lego brick, Billund. Star

Knott's to Open 4D Interactive Voyage
Knott's Berry Farm, Buena Park, Calif. — In 2013, Knott's Berry Farm expanded the Boardwalk Pier with new construction and ultimately new attractions. Apparently, all of this activity has stirred up the "mystic lair" of The Queen of Kraken and her aquatic army. What do they most desire to feed on? The answer is steel, of which there is plenty of roller coaster steel in the park! Well, that is the backsto-

ry anyway of Voyage of the Iron Reef. Guests will journey in four-person submarine-inspired ride vehicles equipped with freeze rays on a quest to save the park. Riders will be immersed in a 3D environment that takes four minutes to travel 600 feet of track through 11 different scenes. The scenes react to the actions and accuracy of the guests, so the experience will vary from ride to ride. Finally, you are given a score as you exit into the undocking station. The ride is scheduled to open this spring.



Out of the Loop Twitter Feed

For more ongoing coverage of news out of the Central Florida loop, follow me on Twitter @AttractionsOOTL. Also follow our main Twitter feed @Attractions.



Lights, Camera, Attraction!



Disney's Hollywood Studios



O

n Friday the 13th in February, Disney released a new product line based on the Hollywood Tower Hotel at the Twilight Zone Tower of Terror attraction gift shop. Along with the new merchandise, the exit area and gift shop received some updates too: These dolls mysteriously appeared. The girl doll laying on her side, as you may recognize, is a Talky Tina doll from the "Living Doll" episode of "The Twilight Zone". The doll in the yellow clothes doesn't seem to be from any particular episode, but keep an eye on him. He'll be watching you the whole time you pass by the PhotoPass desk.



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